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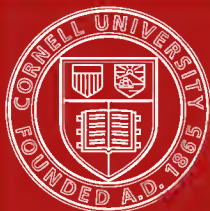
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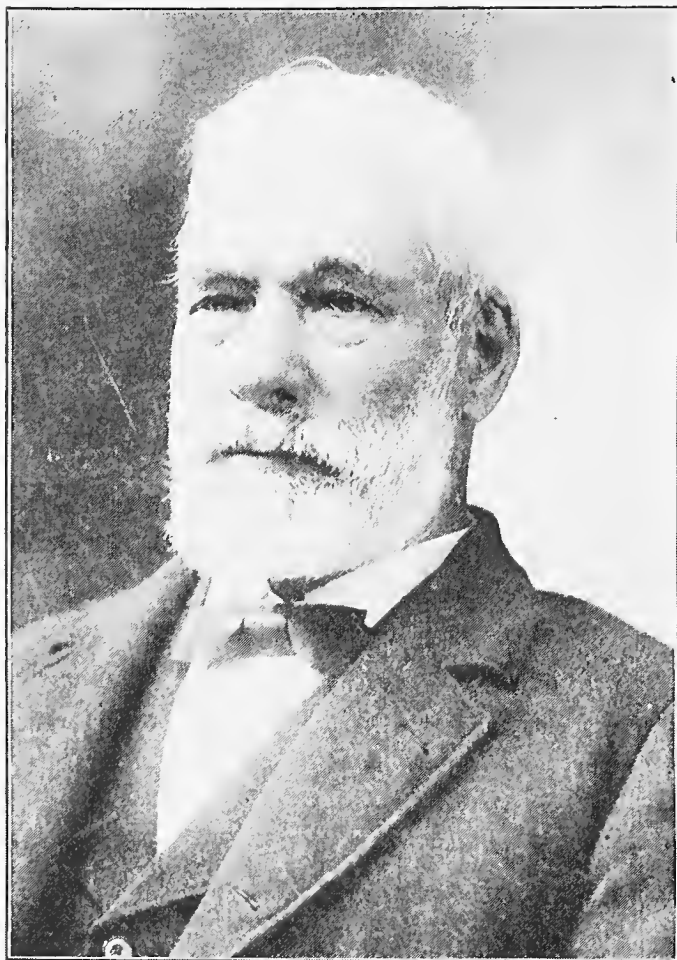
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ANDREW ROY

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
COAL MINERS  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES

FROM THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINES TO THE CLOSE  
OF THE ANTHRACITE STRIKE OF 1902  
INCLUDING  
A BRIEF SKETCH OF EARLY BRITISH MINERS

BY  
HON. ANDREW ROY  
Author of "The Coal Mines," "The Practical Miners' Companion,"  
"Recollections of a Prisoner of War."

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THIRD EDITION  
REVISED AND ENLARGED

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COLUMBUS, OHIO  
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BY

ANDREW ROY



TO MY  
FORMER FELLOW-WORKMEN  
THE MINERS OF THE UNITED STATES  
AND  
THEIR PEERLESS LEADER  
JOHN MITCHELL  
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED



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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

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There are undoubtedly few men engaged in or connected with the mining industry of this country, who are not familiar with the name of Andrew Roy, mining geologist and ex-chief mine inspector of the State of Ohio, through that gentleman's writings upon numerous topics pertaining to the industry. By far the greater number, however, are not aware that Mr. Roy attained the well-merited position as an authority upon mining matters, which he has held for so many years only through his own indefatigable efforts, and may well be called a typical self-made man, an illustration of what perseverance can accomplish when directed rightly.

Roy is of Scotch birth and parentage. He emigrated to this country in his 16th year, and for a number of years afterward worked in the mines of the Frostburg coal region. He also wrought in the mines of Kentucky, Illinois and Arkansas, and was living in the latter state when the rebels fired on Fort Sumpter. Roy did not hesitate a moment in choosing sides, but threw down his tools and started north, enlisting in the 10th Pennsylvania Reserves infantry. His regiment took part in eighteen of the bloodiest battles of the war, but he himself was shot through the body early in the struggle, and was never able afterward to rejoin the regiment. He was left for dead in one of the most hotly contested battles of the Peninsula in front of Richmond, June 27, 1862. The rebel surgeon in dressing his wound told him he could not live three days. He was left on the battlefield for sixteen days, and during that time had no covering but the naked sky. His wound became filled with maggots; he tore his shirt up for bandages; he gave away his shoes to a barefooted Alabama private who had assisted in carrying him to a shady tree and had offered to share with him the only cracker in his haversack. Scenes like these ennoble our nature.

The prisoners were finally removed to Richmond and lodged in the infamous Libby prison. Roy has described in words that freeze the blood the horrors of this modern "Black Hole of Calcutta." Hundreds of wounded men were packed so closely

together that there was scarcely room left to pass through the building; their beds were the naked floor, over which thousands of body vermin crawled and tormented the wounded and dying soldiers. Without medical attendance, half starved, no water to drink save what came from the canal, scores died daily. Roy had a constitution of iron and a heart that never yielded to despair, and bore the horrors through until the prisoners were paroled and sent north in August. All this time he was mourned at home and in his company as dead. His comrades had written his mother that her son had fallen mortally wounded at the battle of Gaines' Hill, and she was wearing mourning for him when a letter was placed in her hands from Fortress Monroe, informing her of his return to "God's country." She said that if he had risen out of the grave before her she could not have been more surprised. The ball had passed through the left pelvis bone, and the wound would not heal up. After thirteen months of suffering he had an operation performed in Baltimore by Prof. Smith, who extracted sixteen pieces of bone from the wound. A few months later he visited Pittsburg and submitted to a second operation by Dr. Walters, who took two more pieces of dead bone from the wound. He was then discharged as unfit for further service, on a full pension.

In 1865 he came to Ohio and found employment as a mine boss and as a surveyor of mines. Upon the occurrence of the Avondale horror in 1869 he was the first man outside of the anthracite region to demand laws for the ventilation and inspection of mines. The anthracite miners had prepared a bill for their own district, believing that their mines required a special act. Roy, in company with his brother David, framed a bill for the bituminous mines of Pennsylvania, providing for six inspectors and forwarded the bill to the representative from Mercer county in the state legislature, Mr. Wheeler, showed the bill to a number of representatives from the bituminous field, but none of them except Miles Humphreys gave it any encouragement. Humphreys had just left his forge as a boiler in Pennsylvania to enter the House of Delegates at Harrisburg, and urged Mr. Wheeler to introduce the bill. Wheeler, however, cut out all the provisions for inspection and recast the bill so as to apply to Mercer only, and in this condition it became a law. The law became a dead letter.

The following spring the miners of the Mahoning Valley, at Roy's solicitation, took up the question of inspection. A com-



AN OLD MINER

mittee appointed by the miners, consisting of Andrew Roy, David Owens and Wm. Thomson, was selected to draft a bill on the subject. The committee met in Roy's house at Church Hill and framed a bill for Ohio mines, and in the following January, on the meeting of the General Assembly, Roy and John B. Lewis were instructed to proceed to Columbus and make a fight for the bill.

Senator Daugherty of Fairfield county, introduced the bill, but it was no sooner printed than it raised a storm of indignation among the mine owners of the state, who not only lobbied against its passage, but employed legal talent to appear before the legislative committee to argue against it. They even secured the influence and presence of several members of the state geological corps. All this array of capital, legal learning and scientific research Roy was obliged to meet in debate. Hon. Lewis Green, the member of the House from Logan county, writing on this subject a year or two ago in the *Hocking Sentinel*, says that although Roy was met before the committee by the keenest talent the operators could secure in the state, he held his own with them all.

The General Assembly, on Roy's suggestion, passed a joint resolution requiring the governor to appoint a commission to investigate the question of the dangers of mining and the best means of protecting the lives and health of miners. Governor Hayes appointed Hon. Chas. Reemelin, Major B. F. Skinner and Andrew Roy on this commission. Roy's associates were in favor of taking the testimony of the operators and miners rather than investigating the condition of the mines by personal inspection. Roy, however, insisted on visiting the working places under ground. The commission made two reports, the minority one being prepared by Roy, and the General Assembly adopted all of his recommendations except as to inspection, this provision having been stricken out of the bill through the efforts of the operators, who fought this feature of the mining law with a bitter and determined opposition to the 'ast. In 1874, however, the sections of the bill for inspection were restored, the bill for this purpose having been introduced by Mr. Baker of Perry county.

The venerable Wm. Allen, governor, tendered Andrew Roy the position of mine inspector under the new law. Every coal operator in the state, with a single exception, opposed the appointment, by remonstrances and personal solicitation. The



MR. AND MRS. ROY, THEIR SEVEN CHILDREN AND ONE GRAND-DAUGHTER.  
(Photo taken in 1891.)

old governor sent for Roy, questioned him keenly in regard to his experience and knowledge of mining, and when afterward a delegation of operators visited the grand old man to further remonstrate against Roy's appointment one of them suggested that he was not competent for the position. The governor answered him: "I am able to say to you that Roy knows more about mining than all of you put together. Gentlemen, that matter is settled," and picking up a newspaper began reading it as they filed out of the office. Roy gave his whole time and attention to the duties of the office. The first year he was seldom at home a night, and walked on foot hundreds of miles under ground to make himself acquainted with the condition of the mines and to urge the improvements needed to comply with the law. In his annual message to the General Assembly Governor Allen paid him a very high compliment, and referred to the law itself as an act of justice and mercy to the men who delve in our mines.

He organized the Ohio Institute of Mining Engineers in 1881. At the Ironton meeting of the Institute in 1887 he read a paper on mining schools, pointing out the advantage of such a school in connection with the mining department in the Ohio State University. A committee was appointed with Roy as chairman to confer with the trustees of the University in regard to the matter. The board adopted the views of the Institute, recommended the creation of a mining course, and the General Assembly at once passed a bill making all needed provisions for the school. It has turned out many able men.

Today Mr. Roy is one of the country's great practical geologists, an authority upon mining, and is the author of several works on coal mining. He is living at Glen Roy, in Jackson county, Ohio, and enjoys life, finding employment to his taste in examining and reporting on mineral properties and mines. He has always taken a deep interest in worthy men among the coal miners, and many a successful mine boss and mine superintendent acknowledges with gratitude his obligations to Andrew Roy.

# A HISTORY OF THE COAL MINERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE FORMATION OF COAL.

**I**T is a little more than a hundred years since science began to investigate the manner of the formation of coal. Its vegetable origin was recognized by James Hutton as early as 1785. Its combustible properties, chemical composition, microscopic structure, the impression of the plants and trees found in the roof shales and in the fire clay floor clearly demonstrated that it was the residue of the hydro-carbon of plants. But where the plants came from — whether they had been drifted by rivers into bays and estuaries, as the vast rafts of floating dead trees are now accumulated in the lower Mississippi river, or had grown on the spot where the coal is now found, was not at first clear.

Bischoff and the earlier geologists held that the carboniferous tissue was an accumulation of vegetable matter which had been drifted by rivers into the Savannas where the coal is now found; and this was the generally accepted view until Sir William Logan, while engaged in a survey of the South Wales coal field, pointed out the fact that the floor of every seam in that field was penetrated in all directions by the roots and rootlets of the same trees met in the roof shales; that all the beds of coal were found resting on a bed of fire clay, and he advanced the theory, which is now almost universally accepted,

that coal beds were built from the leaves and stems of trees and plants which grew and died, and became decomposed and mineralized on the spot where the coal is found.

Millions of years before man was formed out of the dust of the earth and made a living soul, when "mail-clad fishes and gigantic salamanders were the monarchs of the animated world," there existed in many parts of the earth vast marshes or swampy plains, which skirted the ocean or formed low islands near the shore. These Savannas gave rise to a profuse and luxuriant vegetation consisting of numerous, beautiful and various plants, which differed in size from small mosses to stately trees, sixty to seventy feet in height. These strange trees, which raised their scaled trunks and waved their foliage under the stimulus of the sunshine of long past ages, were the beginning of the formation of coal. There was remarkable uniformity in the vegetation of this coal-producing period; for in all the coal fields of the world the remains of the same species of trees, plants and ferns are found in the roof shales, in the coal itself, and in the underclay which forms the floor of coal mines.

These plants and trees, of which more than a thousand different species have been described by geologists, dropped their leaves and fruit year after year, and in time died and decomposed themselves. But new forests arose, and thus growth and decay went on through many slowly moving centuries until there was accumulated a mingled mass of vegetable tissue, similar to the beat bogs of the present day.

At length through the agency of subterranean forces, a subsidence or downward movement of the land took place. The earth gradually and slowly sank and as the mingled accumulation of matted vegetation was carried beneath the level of the sea, the water flowed in over it, carrying sand, mud and other sedimentary materials, which settled in layers at the bottom. The sinking process was very slow, averaging not more than two or three feet every hundred years. Nature

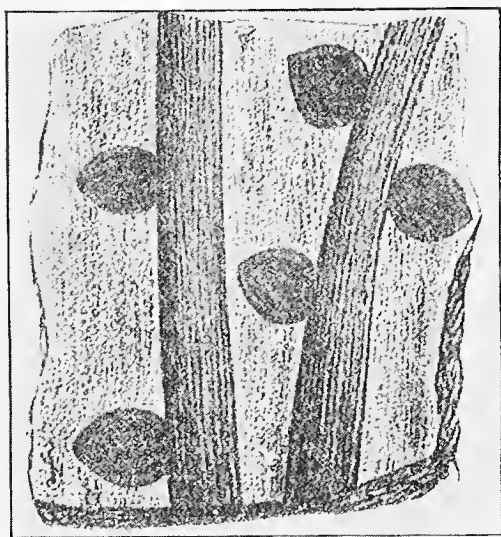


IDEAL FOREST OF THE COAL MEASURE PERIOD.



is a slow but busy worker, and a thousand years are but as one day with the great I AM.

As the land continued to sink the ocean currents brought in more sediment. The weight of this superincumbent mass pressed the bed of peat until the plants, matting together, became hard and compact, and ultimately became a bed of coal. During the hardening process a portion of the gases escaped in the form of light carburetted hydrogen and car-



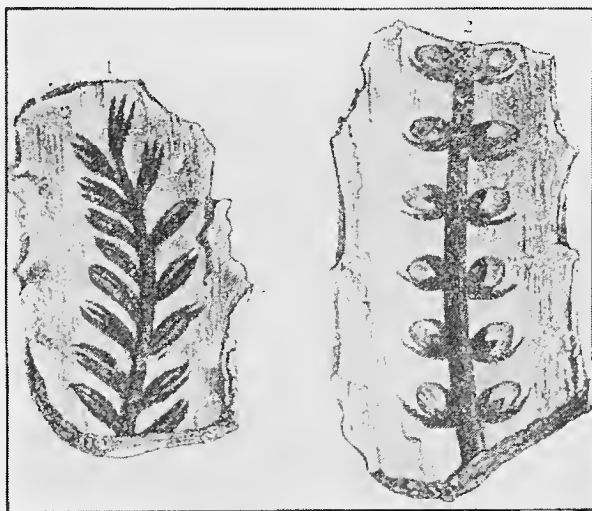
FROM OHIO COAL MEASURES.

bonic acid gas, which now constitute the fire-damp and black-damp of mines.

The detritus brought over the coal marsh constitute the sandstones, shales, fire-clays and iron ores, which compose the superincumbent strata. The limestones were derived from the shells of the mollusca, from the secretions of the coal

polyps and from the remains of other shell fish which lived in the water overlying the buried coal vegetation.

The downward movement of the land was in time arrested, and the waters of the ocean were filled up and a new subaerial surface was formed. This new plain was again covered with a growth of vegetation similar to the one described. Generations of forests again succeeded each other until material was accumulated for the formation of another seam of coal.



COAL PLANTS OF OHIO MINES.

Then followed another downward movement of the land and another burial of the coal vegetation by the detritus of the sea.

It has been estimated that it would require a period of eighteen hundred years to form material to make a foot of thickness of coal. At this rate of calculation fully seven thousand years were necessary to build up the peat bog to form a four-foot vein. As several coal fields of the world contain seams exceeding thirty and forty feet of thickness it

would take a peat bog from three hundred to four hundred feet in thickness to build up such seams — an enormous amount of vegetable tissue compared to the peat bogs of the present day, the thickness of which seldom exceed forty feet.

In many coal mines casts of trees, branches and ferns, lie stretched in the roof shales in abundant and luxuriant profusion, rivaling anything that may be seen in any conservatory on earth. Such mines challenge the admiration of geologists, and tons upon tons of shale have been collected and sent to the museums of mining schools and colleges for the benefit of science.

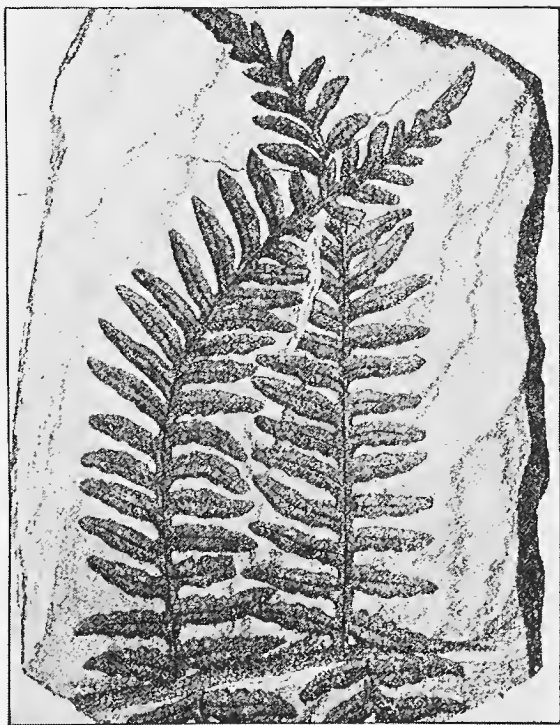
The carboniferous trees, the casts of which are so often met lying stretched across the working places of the miners, fell during the first stages of the land subsidence — rotting and falling at the water line. The trunks of trees called bellmounds, are met in the miners' rooms standing as they grew, passing up into the roof for a foot or two. Bellmounds are very dangerous, being liable to slip out and fall without a moment's warning upon the unsuspecting miner.

Of the numerous forms of vegetable life from which coal is derived the greater portion of the bed was formed from trees allied to the club mosses of the present period. Vegetation during the coal-forming era attained a vigor never before or since equalled. The trees which represent our club mosses were 50 to 70 feet in height. Frequently the foliage and fruit of these flora are met. I have gathered hundreds of nuts resembling filberts from among the casts of the interlocked prostrate trees.

In certain circumscribed areas where part of the coal is cannel, the remains of animals and fishes are numerous, and the casts of both plants and animals have been found in the bellmounds, which must have lodged there when the bellmounds were hollow stumps standing erect as they grew. The floor of mines is always penetrated with rootlets of the trees which formed the coal, many of which are spread out in long

radiating branches with small circular indentations on their surfaces, and are often supposed by miners to be fossilized snakes.

In a mine on the Ohio river in Columbiana county, Ohio, I have passed hours while State Inspector of Mines, splitting



FERNS FOUND IN THE ROOF OF COAL MINES.

up the cannel coal which formed the lower part of the seam, searching for the remains of fishes, and have found them as plainly imbedded in the coal as if they had been photographed from life. Scales, teeth and fins were sometimes met.

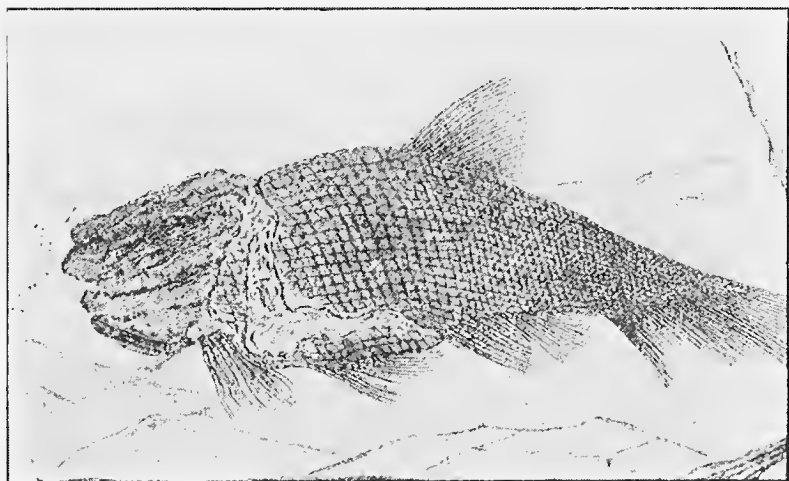
The tracks of reptiles, formed as they walked across the soft and muddy sediment of the ancient shore, have been identified in the roof shales of one of the mines of the Hocking Valley of Ohio. A slab bearing these footprints is now in the geological museum of the State University. A hundred



COAL MEASURE FERNS — OHIO MINES.

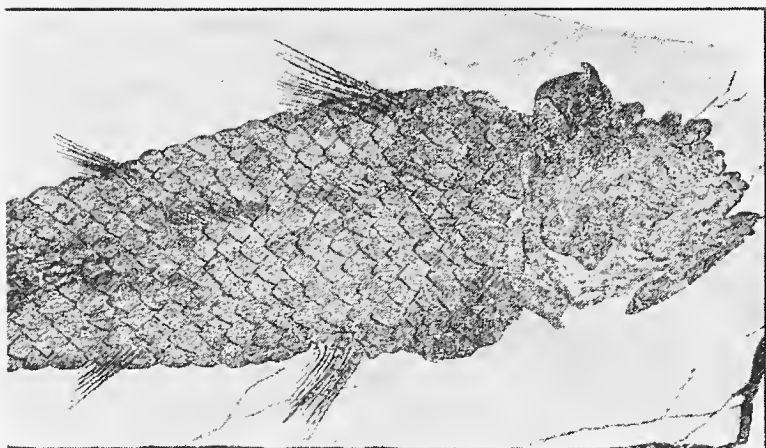
and fifty species of fishes, many of them of immense size as compared with the fishes of the present day, have been found in cannel coal.

Although coal is now regarded as the mainspring of modern civilization and its possession by a nation as the highest material boon, there was long a prejudice against its use. In England during the reign of Edward the First, the king issued a proclamation forbidding the use of coal in London, and commanded all persons, except blacksmiths, to make their fires of wood. One man is said to have been hanged for disobeying the royal decree. The people of London thought the smoke from the coal produced disease of the lungs and chest. In Paris, when the first shipments were made from the Newcastle mines, in England, in 1769, the coal was accused of polluting the air, of causing diseases of the lungs and chest; and even of impairing the beauty and delicacy of the female complexion.



REMAINS OF FISH FOUND IN CANNEL COAL.

In the United States coal was discriminated against by the steamboat-men of the Ohio river, as late as the year 1842, and they had to be bribed to consent to use it for generating steam. Railway locomotive engineers and firemen held out against the use of coal. But all prejudice disappeared after a trial of the despised fuel, and "King Coal," the mighty hero of the mine, now sets the wheels of every industry in motion,



FISH FOUND IN CANNEL COAL IN OHIO.

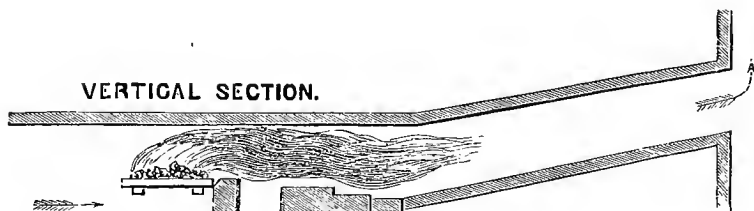
and causes the commerce of the earth to be carried to its utmost limits.

If coal is burnt in the open air, heat is produced and nothing left but a little ash. Burn it in a closed vessel, however, and marvelous changes occur. In the first place, coal-gas is produced, which after having been collected and chemically treated is supplied to every city home. Ammonia is obtained, important in modern agriculture, because by its means plants can be artificially supplied with the nitrogen they need. Then again, asphalt is produced, much used in road-making, although the gas-retort is not the chief source



of its supply. Lastly, a black, noisome ooze is collected which goes by the name of "coal-tar." It is this which, at the touch of the modern chemist's wand, is transformed into the most widely different substances imaginable.

Every hue of nature has been extracted from this foul-smelling coal-tar, and in addition many beautiful colors utterly unlike anything to be found in nature have been charmed out of it. To such proportions has the coal-tar industry grown that natural dyes are now rarely employed. Splendid reds of all shades, delicate blues, rich greens, exquisite yellows, warm browns and dead blacks are all obtained from coal. The dyes thus artificially made are numbered by thousands. Hardly a week passes but the discovery of a new dye is chronicled by scientific journals.



## CHAPTER II.

EARLY BRITISH MINING. — SLAVERY OF THE SCOTTISH  
COLLIERS. — WOMEN EMPLOYED IN COAL MINES.  
MINERS FORM UNIONS.

**I**N the feudal ages miners, equally with other laborers of the mother country, were serfs. But the tradition that colliers passed their days and nights in the mines, marrying and given in marriage, living and dying there, is not warranted by the facts. American statesmen and men of science, nay even British statesmen of the past generation, believed and taught that the coal miners of England seldom saw the light of day. Cobbett delivered a lecture in Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1832 of which the following is an extract: "Here is the most wonderful thing in the whole world — thousands of men and thousands of horses continually living underground; children born there, and who sometimes never see the surface at all, though they live to a considerable age." This belief in the subterranean life of the British miner doubtless had its origin in the fact that prisoners of war taken by the ancient Romans were condemned to work in the mines, and lived and died there.

Coal was mined along its line of outcrop in the British Isles with picks made of oak and flint before the birth of Christ. The Romans, while in Britain, also mined it to some extent. Their workings extended underground for several hundred yards and resembled the tessellated pavement of the Roman villas. We catch occasional glimpses of the British collier, mainly through accounts of explosions of fire-damp and other mining accidents during the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. But he does not appear conspicuously in British annals until the early part of the seventeenth century, when an act of the Scottish

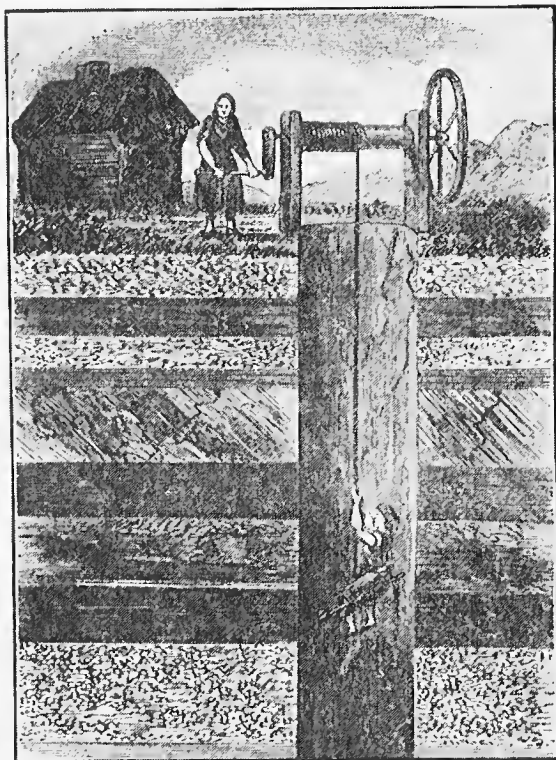
Parliament, passed in the year 1606, made bondmen of the colliers of North Britian.

No mention is made of the coal miners of England in any parliamentary statute until the year 1736, when a law was enacted for the prevention of incendiarism at coal mines. This law provided that any person or persons who willfully and maliciously set fire to any pit should, upon being lawfully convicted, suffer death, as in cases of felony, without benefit of clergy. In 1800 another law was enacted by parliament for the security of collieries and mines; and for the regulation of collieries and mines, the first clause of which provided that any person filling up an airway or damaging any part of a mine shall upon conviction be guilty of felony and transported for seven years; the third clause provided that any person not working according to agreement or contrary to the direction of the superintendent shall forfeit 40 shillings, and be subject to imprisonment for non-payment.

The miners were not represented by delegates nor by agents when these laws were under consideration. In those days miners had no rights that mine owners were bound to respect. They worked from 12 to 15 hours a day, and seldom saw daylight except on Sunday. Ventilation was not understood, and fire-damp explosions were of regular occurrence. In mines in which no fire-damp existed the mephitic vapors were allowed to accumulate to such a degree that miners frequently sank under their insidious influence, and died in the mines from their effects.

In the "Vindication of Natural Society," published in 1756, the following picture of the miners is presented: "These unhappy wretches scarce ever see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth, where they work at a severe and dismal task without the least prospect of being delivered from it. They have their health miserably impaired, and their lives cut short, by being perpetually confined in the close vapors of these malignant minerals."

They are described as having a peculiar bodily configuration, their legs being often bent, their backs bowed, and their shoulders high. Their Sunday dress was gay and singular, their manner and language unlike those of the sur-



SINKING THE SHAFT IN PRIMITIVE MANNER.

rounding country. In "Southey's Life of Wesley," they are described as a race as lawless as the foresters, their forefathers; but far more brutal, and in dialect and appearance as being altogether different from the people of the surround-

ing country. When, in 1737, the celebrated preacher, Whitefield, proposed coming to America to preach the gospel to the Indians, his friends said to him: "What need is there to go abroad? If you want to convert savages there are colliers enough in Kingwood."

Whitefield, upon returning from America, went among the colliers of Kingwood, and Southey says of this visit: "In truth it was a matter of duty and sound policy — which is always duty — that these people should not be left to a state of bestial ignorance — heathens, or worse than heathens, in the midst of a Christian country, and brutal as savages, in the vicinity of the second city in England."

The majority of these colliers had never heard the gospel preached, but they listened with marked interest to the eloquent divine whose powerful voice could be heard over the vast crowds, sometimes amounting to 20,000 people. The great preacher soon discovered that those black and grim-faced miners were susceptible of ennobling influences, notwithstanding the physical degradation to which the systematic neglect of their employers and the oppressive and tyrannical laws of Parliament had reduced them. Gutters were made down their grimy cheeks by the tears they shed, as they listened for the first time to the wonderful story of a life beyond the grave, where sin and sorrow are unknown, and where the fiery and mephitic vapors of the mine never come.

These are the only glimpses we catch of the English miner in the far away days of the rude forefathers of the mine. It is the worst side only which has been saved, and it is probably considerably overdrawn; for it is a general, though a pardonable custom, with religious people, when bemoaning the sins of the ungodly, to deal in exaggeration. Those nobler traits of character, which are the rich inheritance of the English, and of the American miner, of British birth or descent, which impel them to rush into the jaws of death, into the mouth of

hell, to attempt the rescue of forlorn comrades, in cases of mining catastrophes, are not preserved.

In the early days of British mining there seems to have been a horror attached to subterranean operations; for men could not be readily found to labor in the gloomy recesses of the earth amidst mephitic vapors, which cramped the limbs, contracted the chest and prostrated the energies beyond relief, before the middle age of life was reached. In order to get men to meet the ever-increasing demand for coal, the mine owners of Scotland conceived the idea of making slaves of the colliers, and the Parliament of Scotland obsequiously complied with their wishes.

An act of the Scottish Parliament, passed in 1606, made bondmen for life of the colliers. The act provided that all colliers, coal-bearers and salters who should leave their masters, without their written consent, were to be esteemed and held as thieves, and full permission was given in the same act for all owners of coal mines "to lay hold on all sturdy beggars and thieves" and compel them to work in the mines; and it was also provided that any person who should harbor or employ miners were required to give them up to their masters, on being challenged, within twenty-four hours afterwards, or pay a fine of one hundred pounds Scots.

In 1661 another act of the Scottish Parliament was passed which extended the provisions of the act of 1606 to day laborers and other underground workers not included in the former act, which further provided, "That because said colliers, salters and workmen in coal pits, within the kingdom, do lay off from their work on Pasch, Yule and Whit Sundays, and certain other times in the year, which times they employ in drink and debauchery, to the great offense of God, and prejudice of their masters, it is therefore statute and ordained that said coal hewers and salters, and other workmen in coal pits in this Kingdom work all the six days of the week, except the times of Christmas, under pain of 20

shillings Scots, to be paid to their masters, for every day's failure, and to *suffer punishment in their bodies.*"

The Scottish collier remained in this condition of bondage until the year 1775, when, owing to the growing demand for coal, and the scarcity of miners, a change in the "mining law" became a necessity. A bill was introduced in the British Parliament for the purpose of emancipating the colliers of Scotland, which read as follows:

"WHEREAS, By the statute laws of Scotland, as explained by the judges of the courts of law there, many colliers and coal-bearers and salters are in a state of slavery and bondage, bound to the collieries, or salt works where they work, for life, and are transferable with the collieries and salt works; and

"WHEREAS, Persons are discouraged from learning the art or business of colliers, or coal bearers, by means whereof there is not a sufficient number of colliers, or coal bearers, in Scotland for working the quantity of coal necessarily wanted; and many newly discovered coals remain unwrought; and many are not sufficiently wrought, to the great loss of the owners and disadvantage of the public;

"BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED, that on and after the first of July, 1775, any person who begins work as a collier in Scotland shall be deemed free, and shall enjoy all the privileges, rights and immunities as the rest of his majesty's subjects."

It was further enacted that all colliers in Scotland who were under twenty-one years of age should be free after seven years' further service; all between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five, should be free after ten years; all between the ages of thirty-five and forty-five should be free after three years. Any collier who had been guilty of entering into a combination with other colliers to leave off working, to the injury of his master, or to compel him to increase his wages, or allowance usually paid to colliers, "should not

obtain his freedom for two years after the respective periods provided in the act."

In order to obtain their freedom the colliers were required to present a petition to the sheriff of the county in which they resided, setting forth their claims to freedom and stating their ages. This petition the sheriff sent to the owner of the bondmen for objection or confirmation, and if no objection was made within ten days the sheriff declared the miner entitled to freedom as provided by law. If the master objected, proof had to be furnished on both sides, and the sheriff's decision was final. Many of the colliers were either too ignorant, or too improvident to comply with the requirements of the law, and all such continued in bondage until a second act, passed in 1799, freed them without further limit.

The act of 1775, instead of being hailed as a blessing, was looked upon with suspicion by the colliers. Sir Walter Scott informs us that so far from prizing the blessings of liberty, the colliers regarded the interest taken in their emancipation as a mere device of their masters to get "rid of the harigold money which was paid them when a female child was born, and made an addition to the live stock of their master's property." But they soon began to appreciate the blessings of freedom; they gradually acquired more prudent habits, and not only became reliable workmen, but did more work in a day than they were accustomed to do in two, in their bondage.

The miners began to gather around the pit as early as three o'clock in the morning, but were not allowed to go down until four, the first on the ground having the right of descent. The corves held four to six people. The father, his sons and daughters generally descended together; the youngsters sitting in the bottom of the corve, the father standing erect, with one leg outside, and one arm guiding the corve, to keep it from striking the sides of the pit. The younger and bolder



men who had no charge caught the rope, as the cage descended below the platform, and clung to it until the bottom was reached. Sometimes three or four men would descend in this manner one above the other. Before going down they stuck their picks behind their backs, between their jackets and vests. A curious habit with miners in those days was carrying their picks on their left arm. When a miner carried a pick in any other manner it was proof that he was not a trained pitman.



WOMEN HAULING AND CARRYING COAL IN SCOTLAND.

In hauling, two women were usually employed — one behind and the other in front; the forward one was hitched to the mine car, with a belt around her waist and a chain passed between her legs. In many parts of England the women dressed like boys.

When the commissioners appointed by Parliament in 1842 to inquire into the operation and results of female labor in coal mines made their report, they presented a picture of deadly physical oppression and systematic slavery which no one unacquainted with the facts would credit. The women worked twelve to fourteen hours a day in the damp and unwholesome air of mines, crawling on all fours, in the low veins, in dragging the loaded cars along roadways, which in many places were covered with water a foot deep.

In Scotland women were not only employed in hauling the coal along such roadways, but at many mines they carried the coal up the shaft on their backs, through a long winding stairway, the load being carried in wicker cribs fitted to the backs of the women and held in place by leather straps passing around their foreheads. Mr. Robert Bald, the eminent coal viewer of Scotland, who knew them well, stated that their day's work was equal to carrying a hundred weight from the sea level to the top of Ben Lomond; and Hugh Miller, the celebrated geologist, who in 1824 worked at his trade as a mason at one of the mining villages near Edinburgh, states in his autobiography that he often saw the poor women coal-bearers toiling under their loads, and crying like children along the upper rounds of the wooden stair that traversed the shaft.

It was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that the colliers of Great Britain began to arrest public attention. Previous to 1824, combinations of workmen for the advancement of wages were forbidden by law, and were punishable by fines and imprisonment. Although denied the right to organize, the miners formed secret unions during the latter half of the eighteenth century, and met and transacted business in defiance of law.

For many years after the discovery of the steam engine the demand for coal was greatly in excess of the supply; and this condition of the trade was greatly augmented during the

stormy period of the French Revolution. The miners being forbidden by law to ask for an advance of wages, sought work at mines where the coal was easiest mined. The mine owners, who needed men to meet the growing demand for coal, resorted to the military method of offering bounties to all who would agree to work for a year. All the other masters followed this example, and for many years the annual hiring and bounty remained in vogue.

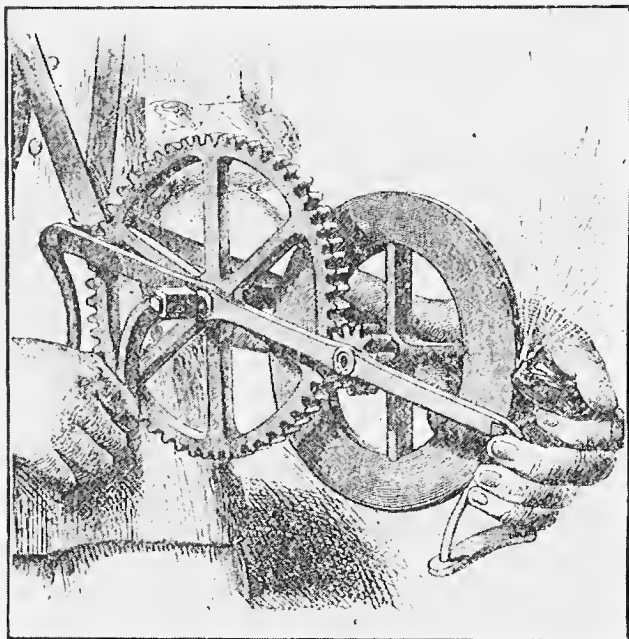
After the overthrow of Napoleon on the disastrous field of Waterloo a season of unparalleled depression occurred. Nearly every furnace went out of blast, and more than half the coal mines shut down. Great suffering resulted. A mass convention of the miners of Staffordshire resolved to make their condition known to the government. A petition was drawn up to be presented to Parliament, and three committees of fifty men each started for London, drawing a wagon-load of coals bearing the inscription, "Rather Work Than Beg." They moved at the rate of twelve miles a day, each team taking a different route. Before reaching London, however, they were met by a posse of officers of the Home Department, who purchased their coal, and advised the men to return home; that the government could not help them. The miners listened with the utmost respect to the officers, and returned to Staffordshire in a peaceable manner.

The sudden and widespread depression of the coal trade which followed the overthrow of Napoleon brought the system of bounty hiring to an end. For a number of years, after the return of peace, work could not be had, even at starvation wages, at any of the trades. Riots and bloodshed, the sacking of stores, fights between the police and starving mobs; calling out the militia, were of almost daily occurrence.

The rapid and powerful combination of labor unions in all the trades, during these years of depression and tumult, attracted the earnest attention of Parliament, and in the year 1824 all laws prohibiting the combination of workingmen,

for the purpose of raising wages, were wiped from the statute books.

Prior to the invention of the safety lamp several ingenious appliances were used to shed light in mines which gave off explosive mixtures of fire-damp. After an explosion fresh herrings were sometimes taken underground, the scales of



STEEL MILL FOR LIGHTING MINES.

which emitted a feeble light to a rescuing band of explorers. But the steel mill, invented by James Spedding of Whitehaven, England, in 1775, was the chief reliance to light the subterranean workers in searching for the living and the dead involved in a fire-damp catastrophe.

This machine consisted of a small iron frame upon which two wheels were mounted. The miner set the wheels in motion by turning a crank with the right hand; he held a piece of flint against one of the wheels with the other, which emitted a succession of luminous sparks that created a feeble ray of light in the surrounding darkness. This machine was also used for lighting up the workings of mines which gave off fire-damp in such volume that a naked light could not be used in mining the coal. It was a very expensive manner of mining, as it required one man to turn the crank of the machine to give light to another who was digging the coal. Since no better method was known of lighting up the workings of mines, which gave off an explosive mixture of fire-damp the steel mill was in general use until Sir Humphrey Davy discovered the safety lamp in the year 1816.

## CHAPTER III.

LEGISLATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINERS. — ACCIDENT  
AT HARTLEY COLLIERY. — M'DONALD AND BURT  
IN PARLIAMENT.

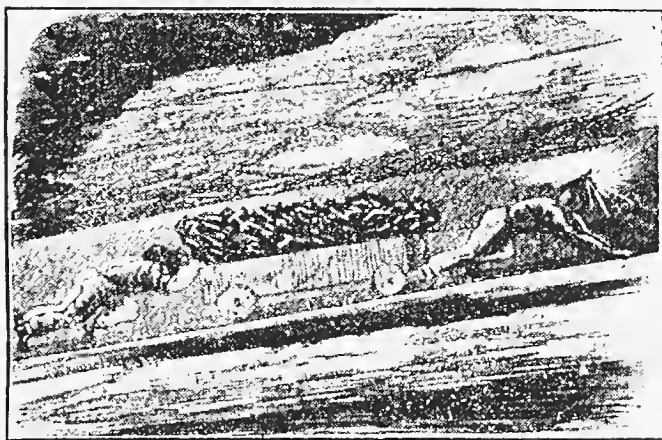
THE repeal of the laws which forbade the workingmen of Great Britain from organizing labor unions, was the declaration of independence to the industrial masses, and they were not slow to assert their manhood. Trades unions were everywhere organized; wages were forced upward until they were doubled — labor now held up its head.

In consequence of a dreadful explosion of fire-damp, which occurred at the Felling Colliery, in the year 1812, by which nine-two miners were killed, Sir Humphrey Davy, an eminent chemist, visited the mines of the New Castle district, and collected various specimens of fire-damp, with which he made a series of experiments which resulted in the invention of the safety lamp. George Stephenson, the inventor of the locomotive in later years, who was at this time mining engineer for Killingsworth Colliery, was at work on his safety lamp at the same time. Both contended for priority of invention, but the award was given to Davy.

Before the occurrence of the Felling catastrophe coroners inquests were never held on the bodies of miners killed by explosion, or in any other manner; the mine owners, for manifest reasons being averse to inquiry. The cause of these accidents were invariably laid upon the carelessness or ignorance of the dead miners. Shortly after this accident, however, a society of gentlemen in Sunderland was organized, with Sir Ralph Millbank as president, for the purpose of making inquiry into accidents in coal mines. This society called the attention of the magistrates to the flagrant violation of law in mining accidents, and demanded that inquests

be held in the future; and from this time inquests were generally held. In the case of the Felling explosion the dead bodies of the miners were buried without either inquiry or record.

In 1829 Parliament appointed a committee to inquire into the cause of accidents in coal mines. The report of this committee laid the blame on the carelessness of the miners. But one of the commissioners appointed to enforce the Factory Act of 1833 visited a coal mine in his district and made a special report of its condition.



HAULING COAL IN ENGLAND IN EARLY MINING DAYS.

In submitting his report the commissioner used the following language: "I can not much err in coming to the conclusion, both from what I saw and the evidence of the witnesses under oath, that it must appear to every impartial judge of the occupation, that the hardest labor in the worst room, in the worst conducted factory, is less hard, less cruel, and less demoralizing than in that of the best of coal mines."

Although much had been expected from the invention of the safety lamp, explosions continued with more alarming results than ever. In consequence of an accident which occurred at the St. Hilda Colliery, at South Shields, in the year 1838, by which fifty-one miners were burned to death, a committee of prominent men was organized for the purpose of inquiring into the cause of this explosion. Mr. Thomas Mather was made president of the committee. Its labors continued for three years. The committee examined into a number of other mine explosions. Mr. Mather published a report of its investigations in 1842, replete with valuable information in regard to the cause and prevention of mine accidents; embodying in addition many well considered recommendations for the better regulation and ventilation of mines, and urging legislation to prohibit the employment of females and children. The publication of this report created a profound sensation in England, and was the cause in a large degree of Parliament taking up these subjects and legislating upon them.

In describing the rescue of the imprisoned miners at the St. Hilda explosion, Mr. Mather, who risked his own life to save the imperilled workmen, said: "We beheld the deepest sympathy of the human heart, combined with a courage that has never been surpassed. Their companions were brought out insensible from the surcharged atmosphere, struck down at their feet, almost without life; yet it produced no fear, no flinching, no hesitation; but they stepped gallantly forward to the spot with an almost certainty of suffering a like attack; and when returning to complete consciousness, with an absence of self and personal consideration above all praise, the first wish frequently expressed was to return to their dangerous duty."

Parliament, owing to the persistent efforts of Lord Ashley, who stood forth as the friend and advocate of the industrial masses in the House of Commons, ventured for the first



time in history, to give consideration to the condition of the colliery population of the Island. In 1840 he moved for the appointment of a royal commission to direct an inquiry into the operation and results of female labor in coal mines, and as to the employment of children; and the age at which they are employed, the number of hours they are engaged in work underground; and as to the effect of such employment, both with regard to their morals and to their bodily health.

This commission was on duty two years. It made a careful and elaborate report, the publication of which startled the people of England from Land's End to John O'Groats, and paved the way for a series of measures for the amelioration of miners, which gradually but surely raised the craft from the lowest depth of degradation and ignorance to a plane of respectability and intelligence unsurpassed by any class of workingmen either in Great Britain or any other civilized nation.

This report was followed in July 1842, by the introduction of a bill by Lord Ashley to prohibit the employment of women, and of boys under thirteen years of age from working underground; and providing for the inspection of mines by authority of government, and for abolishing the prevailing system of apprenticing boys.

The discussion which this bill provoked was extremely bitter; many of the members of Parliament were colliery owners, who regarded such legislation as an unwarranted attack upon their proprietary rights. Lord Londonderry, himself an extensive colliery owner, was the leader of the opposition to the bill. In the House of Lords he declared in a speech that some seams of coal required the employment of women; denounced the whole movement as due to hypocritical humanity, and said that if the bill became a law it would result in closing the most important coal mines in the country; that if a mine inspector came to inspect a mine in which he was interested the inspector could go down

the pit the best way he could, but when he got down he could remain there. Lord Ashley, who championed the measure, in referring to the report of the royal commission, considered that the revelation made by it presented a state of things not only disgraceful, but perilous to the country. The Bishop of Norwich, in the House of Lords, favored the bill, and presented a large number of petitions sent up by miners praying for its passage. Lord Londonderry, on the other hand, presented a number of petitions against the bill, and took occasion to remark that in his opinion education among colliers would be a superfluity and a luxury. Lord Palmerston favored the bill, and made a strong speech in its defense. The section of the bill prohibiting boys under thirteen years of age from working in the mines incurred the greatest opposition from colliery owners, particularly those who operated thin seams of coal.

The clauses of the bill for mine inspection were stricken out, but female labor was abolished and boys prohibited from working in mines until they were ten years of age.

Lord Ashley was the first man in parliament to champion the cause of the miners, and to him belongs the honor of wiping out the disgrace of female labor in British coal mines. In all future efforts of the miners of England to ameliorate their condition by legislation, Lord Ashley, later the Marquis of Shaftsbury, stood forth in Parliament as the firm friend of the subterranean workers.

While Parliament had under consideration Lord Ashley's bill the miners, through their organizations, which had now become strong and influential, were discussing a number of deep-rooted grievances, which had been imposed on them in by-gone days, when they were regarded as outcasts and treated like slaves. The usual practice in England and Wales was to bind the men for a year and to subject them to arbitrary fine and imprisonment for any violation of the condition of the bond. Pay days, especially in Scotland,

were made at long intervals; the miners were charged at the rate of a shilling a pound for any advances of money made before the regular pay day. The manner of weighing the coal was also grossly unjust. If the car lacked a pound of weighing a certain amount the miner received nothing whatever for the coal, even though the next car should overweigh several hundred pounds. In many mining districts the mines were contracted to middlemen who overworked their men and paid them in saloons owned or controlled by themselves, and compelled them to spend part of their wages for liquor. Where this system did not obtain the mine-owners kept "Tommy shops" or "truck stores" in which the miners were compelled to spend their earnings, for which they were charged outrageous prices, notwithstanding the law provided that all wages should be paid in the "coin of the realm," regardless of any payment made for goods.

These grievances were laid before their employers who declined to discuss them with their men; a strike resulted, accompanied with considerable tumult and turbulence. The strike lasted five months, both sides displaying a determination to win. Finding the men firm and unyielding the colliery owners threw them out of the houses; the men bivouacked on the roadside and continued to struggle until the Marquis of Londonderry brought in new miners. The strikers then lost all hope of success and returned to work on the old terms.

Disastrous explosions of fire-damp continued to occur, which aroused public sentiment in favor of legislative supervision of the mines. At the Haswell Colliery explosion, Mr. Roberts, the legal adviser of the miners' union, attended the coroner's inquest and drew up a petition in behalf of the miners and forwarded it to the Home Secretary praying for the appointment of a commission to investigate the cause of the accident. Roberts also advised the miners to petition Parliament for the enactment of a law for the ventilation

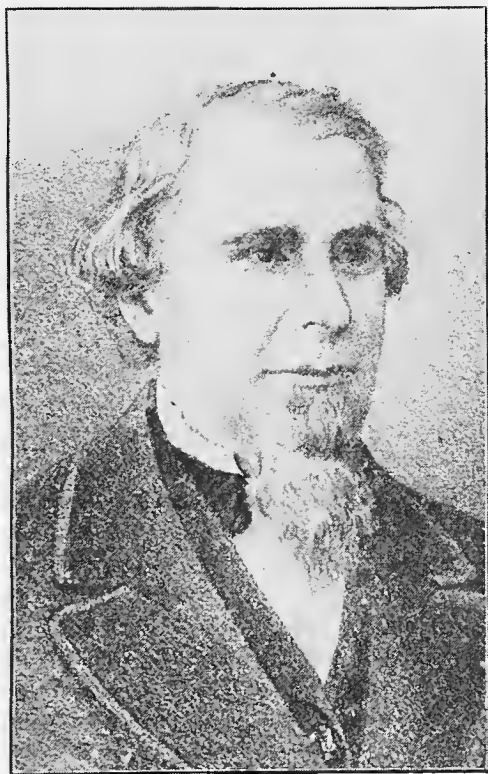
and inspection of mines. Acting on this advice the Miners' National Association sent a monster petition to Parliament by a number of delegates from their own ranks. The petition was placed in the hands of the Hon. Thomas Duncombe, an avowed friend of mine inspection, who soon afterwards introduced a bill providing for the appointment of four chief inspectors and a large number of deputies, and requiring that all mines should be inspected at least four times in each year. On the second reading of the bill Duncombe withdrew it at the instance of the government, and a commission was appointed to visit the leading coal mines of the United Kingdom and take the testimony of both parties in interest as to their condition. Sir George Elliot, once a trapper boy, but then one of the leading colliery operators, testified before the commission and among other things said: "I am a great advocate for plenty of air in a pit; I believe it is the cheapest way to work mines safely; I believe in government inspection of mines; the inspectors ought to go down the pit, and they ought to be practical men who understand the pit when they go down; in fact they ought to be practical miners."

A valuable amount of similar testimony was laid before the commission, which reported the facts to the House of Commons and on the 11th of July, 1850, Lord Carlyle introduced a bill providing for government inspection, which was promptly enacted into a law.

This law provided for two inspectors and was limited to five years. It was the entering wedge to future legislation and its enactment gave great satisfaction to the miners of the country, encouraging them to look to Parliament for the redress of those deep-rooted grievances which they had been unable to extort from their employers by strikes.

The miners of Great Britain at this time had no political influence; they could neither vote nor hold office, and were dependent upon the philanthropy of Parliament for any

legislation which they might secure; or to public-spirited men like James Mather and Prof. Anstead; and statesmen like Joseph Hume and Lord Ashley. Perhaps not more than one in a hundred of the miners of England and Wales could at this time read or write. In Scotland the educational conditions were on the other hand good, free schools having been established by law in every parish, and pay schools by



ALEXANDER M'DONALD, M. P., PRESIDENT MINERS'  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

custom in every mining village. What the miners now needed to push their claims through Parliament, and organize them in solid phalanx was a leader of education and of aggressive character. Such a leader they found in Alexander McDonald.

The history of this man is quite remarkable. He was born at Dalmellington, Scotland, in 1823, and went to work in the mines at the early age of eight years. He attended school for two years previous to beginning work in the mines. His mother was a woman of great force of character, who became ambitious to give her son a good education. She sent him to night school after his long and exhausting day's work in the mine, and instilled into his infant mind a horror of tyranny and oppression. One of his earliest recollections was that of seating himself in a solitary chamber in the mine and forming a resolution to devote his life to the amelioration of the miners of his country. Before he was nineteen years of age he was a local leader in the miners' union of Scotland.

When he attained his majority he entered the University of Glasgow, attending the sessions of college during the winter, working in the mines during the summer, and paying his way through college from money earned in the deep and dark recesses of the mine. On leaving college he was elected president of the miners' union in Scotland. His superior education and earnestness of manner gave him the unbounded confidence of the Scottish miners. He took bold and advanced ground on all questions affecting the amelioration of the craft; using his pen and his tongue to bring the grievances of the subterranean workers before the public. A practical miner, a scholar and a ripe one, he challenged and commanded the respect and admiration of the best minds in the United Kingdom.

McDonald became especially active in advocating additional legislation for the health and safety of miners, and was sent

to the Parliament House in London in 1855, when the first mining law expired by limitation, with a monster petition signed by every miner in the United Kingdom, to urge the passage of a new mining code increasing the inspectors to twelve, providing a force of sub-inspectors, to be composed of practical miners; a board of control to examine mine superintendents and bosses; and providing for the education of boys before they went to work in the mines. These reforms in the management of mines, he advocated with power and eloquence before the mining committees of both Houses; demanding them as rights which the miners were entitled to as British subjects. His practical knowledge of mines was such that he convinced all fair-minded men of the justice of the miners' claims, and silenced, if he did not convince, all opposition to the measure.

Parliament enacted a new mining law as the result of McDonald's pleadings; the number of inspectors were increased and the law was extended indefinitely, but its provisions fell short of providing the necessary safeguards to protect the miner from the fiery and mephitic blasts of death, which environed him in his gloomy work-shop. In 1860 another effort was made to secure the passage of a bill embodying all the demands of the miners; it was supported by a powerful body of miners' delegates headed by McDonald; but the influence of the colliery owners was more potent with Parliament than the manly eloquence of McDonald and his associates.

No provision had been made in the mining law for the escape of miners in case of accident to the shaft, the mine-owners insisting that to require them to sink an escapement shaft would result in closing half the coal mines in the United Kingdom. On the 16th of January, 1862, however, the public mind of England was startled by the imprisonment of 205 miners in the Hartley Colliery, caused by the breaking of the

pumping beam of the water engine. One-half of it, weighing 20 tons, fell down the pit, filling it up with debris to a height of 60 feet from the bottom. The most heroic efforts were made by the mine workers of the surrounding country to effect the release of their imprisoned comrades, which drew tributes of admiration from the queen herself, but none of the men were recovered alive. They died one after another overcome by the mephitic vapors of the mines, before it was possible to effect a rescue.

In consequence of this great calamity a feeling of indignation arose against the mine-owners for their failure to insure the safety of miners, and a demand was made on Parliament, backed by all the power of public sentiment, that provision be made by law for the escape of all underground workers in case of accident to the hoisting shaft. The mine owners raised an angry protest against the enactment of such a measure, pleading that the expense would ruin their business. But Parliament paid no attention to their appeals, and made haste to amend the mining law requiring two separate openings to all mines.

While the work of rescue was going on at the illfated Hartley mine, thousands of people crowded around the mouth of the shaft and so seriously interfered with the plans of the managers that it became necessary to build a high board fence, a flight of stairs and gang-way, as a means of entrance to the shaft. A miner was placed on guard to allow no one to pass within the wall without a written order from the board of managers in charge of the work of rescue. One day a fine carriage was driven up to the shaft and a liveried servant assisted an important looking personage to alight, who walked to the steps and attempted to pass up the stairway when the miner on guard accosted him :

Miner — "Where's your pass, stranger?"

Stranger — "Pass? What is that to you?"

Miner — "You hev to hev a pass to gang up theer."



Stranger — "Do you know who I am?"

Miner — "I div'n know who thou is and I div'nt care"

Stranger — "I am the Mayor of Tynemouth."

Miner — "It din'na matter to me, hinnie, if thou was the horse of Shields, thou canna gang up theer without a pass."

In 1863 the present Miners' National Association of Great Britain was organized of which McDonald was elected president. This organization soon became the most numerous and powerful association of working men in the world. The position of president gave McDonald a commanding influence as a leader. The elective franchise had of late years been greatly extended. Small property owners and large numbers of working men in every pursuit of life had become voters and eligible to hold office. Prospective members of Parliament now found it good politics to cultivate the labor element and pay more attention to the wishes of the working men of the nation than they had hitherto done.

In 1869 the miners were better organized than they had ever been. They had a bold aggressive leader of unquestioned honesty of purpose, who devoted heart and soul to the well-being of the craft. They again prepared a new mining bill and again McDonald and a delegation of miners appeared at the Parliament House to urge the passage of the bill. McDonald stated to the committee that the miners were moderate but firm in their demands, and were resolved to never cease the agitation of the measure until every needed clause were enacted into law, and that they would hold all members responsible from the mining counties of the United Kingdom who failed to perform the full measure of justice to their constituents.

In 1872 the crowning act of British mining legislation embodying every just demand of the miners was secured after a fight of twenty years.

Staffordshire is one of the greatest industrial centers of England. The extension of the ballot to the industrial

masses conferred so much political power on the workingmen in that county that they resolved to run McDonald for Parliament. He was nominated and elected as the workingmen's candidate, and held a seat in the House of Commons from the same constituency at the time of his death. His name is held in grateful remembrance by the toiling masses of Great Britain, who generally and justly regard him as the greatest labor leader which England has yet produced. At his death they erected a monument to his memory.

Thomas Burt, another great leader of British miners, was born at North Shields, England, in 1837, and went to work in the mines at the age of ten years. He attended school for two years, and was able to read and write before entering the mine. His father was a leader in the great strike of 1844 for the abolition of arbitrary fines, the truck system, the payment of wages in the current coin of the realm, and other deep-rooted grievances. The strike, which lasted five months, was bitterly contested on both sides. The miners were thrown out of their houses, and bivouacked on the road-side, or on the moor, like gypsies. This treatment made such an impression on the boyish mind of Burt that he resolved to pass his life in the cause of the miners. After entering the mine he continued his education and the improvement of his mind at his father's fireside; and read such works as Shakespeare, Milton, Burns and Scott while he was in his early teens. As a young man he took an active interest in the cause of temperance, and was for several years secretary of the district temperance society.

Burt was elected president of the miners' union of Northumberland in 1864. A strike was in progress when he assumed charge of the organization. Under his good counsel and prudent management the strikers behaved with remarkable fairness and self-control, and the union had a surplus of several thousand dollars in the treasury at the end of the strike. This money became the nucleus of a fund which amounted to \$80,000, and the membership increased from

4,000 to 16,000, during his presidency. Such was the moderation and fairness of his administration that he won the respect of the colliery managers of the country.

In 1874 Burt was elected to Parliament from Morpeth, receiving a majority of 3,000 votes in a constituency of 4,000, and has represented this constituency in Parliament ever since. Alexander McDonald, the president of the Miners' National Association of Great Britain, was elected to Parliament at the same time, from Staffordshire. These two leaders of miners were the first representatives of labor sent to Parliament. There is food for the reflection of the miners of the United States. This country is now producing more coal than all the world combined; the miners possess more political power than the colliers of Great Britain, and are better educated and more intelligent, hold the balance of power in many congressional districts of the twenty-four coal producing states, yet they have never had a representative from their ranks in Congress, and all too few in State Legislatures. \*

McDonald and Burt served the cause of the miners in Parliament as faithfully as they had done as officers of the union. Whenever a question affecting the interests of miners came before Parliament, McDonald, who was the more aggressive of the two, was on his feet in an instant, and made the House of Commons ring with his manly eloquence. These two representatives, when they went to work in the mines, found the craft in the lowest depths of degradation. Explosions were of almost weekly occurrence. The bodies of the dead miners were buried without inquiry or record. Women and tender girls hauled coal underground, with chains between their legs, toiling so hard that a galley-slave would not have exchanged places with them.

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\* Since the above was written, two miners were elected to Congress in 1906.

The history of the coal miners of Great Britain would be an interesting and curious one. McDonald, a few years before his death, conceived the idea of writing it. No man ever lived who was better fitted to write such a work; but he gave up the idea for want of time. In a letter I received from Mr. Burt, in answer to an inquiry as to whether there was any work of this kind extant, he stated that no book so far as he knew had ever been written on the subject. It is to be hoped that Mr. Burt, or some of the many able and intelligent leaders among the miners of the mother country, will take up the matter and bequeath to our literature the thrilling story of our trans-Atlantic fellow-craftsmen.

## CHAPTER IV.

## EARLY MINING IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE first time coal is mentioned as existing in what is now the United States of America, occurs in the Journal of Father Hennepin, published in the year 1698. He noted the existence of a seam of coal on the banks of the Illinois River as he traveled through that region in 1669.

In 1786, twenty years after Pittsburg was laid out, William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, was granted a charter to mine coal in the hills fronting the city. Coal was first mined in that state by subterranean excavation along the Monongahela River.

The existence of anthracite coal in Eastern Pennsylvania was known as early as the year 1766, and two years later was used for blacksmithing purposes in the Wyoming Valley. Specimens of the coal of the Lehigh Valley were sent to Philadelphia in 1791 for the inspection of manufacturers, with the object of organizing a company to develop the mines; but it was not until 1803 that the first mining company was formed, which was known as the Lehigh Coal Mine Company, and numbered among its members the celebrated Robert Morris. This company mined and shipped several barges of coal from the Lehigh mines to Philadelphia, which were sold to the city authorities for the use of the city engines. But the coal could not be made to burn. It was pronounced "black rock," was broken up into gravel, and thrown on the sidewalk.

Five years later, another attempt was made to introduce anthracite coal in the eastern cities. It again proved a failure. In 1812, however, a third effort was made, and this time it was a success, but the discovery was the result of an

accident. Col. Shoemaker of Pottsville, who took nine loads of coal to Philadelphia, could find no purchasers, owing to the ill success of former trials. He left the coal with several business firms to make experiments with it, assuring them that the coal was being used in the mountains, and giving eminent satisfaction.

The Fairmount Nail and Wire Works, which had taken a load on trial, was the first firm to successfully use the coal. The workmen had spent a whole forenoon in fruitless efforts to start a fire, and went home to dinner in disgust. On returning to work, they were amazed on finding a glowing fire, the furnace doors being red hot, and the furnace itself raised to a white heat. All their former efforts had been directed to stirring the coal as soon as the fire got under headway; real success consisted in letting the fire alone. The "black rocks" of the mountains at once rose in public estimation.

The manufacture of iron, by both anthracite and bituminous coal began almost simultaneously. Anthracite was first successfully used by David Thomas in 1838 at the furnace of the Lehigh Crane Iron Company, Lehigh county, Pennsylvania. In the following year, coke from the mines of the Frostburg region of Western Maryland was used in the furnaces of Lonaconing and Mount Savage. In 1845 raw coal from the Brier Hill vein was successfully used in the Clay furnace, near the village of Sharon, Pennsylvania; and in 1846 in the Lowell furnace, Mahoning county, Ohio. The use of raw coal in the blast furnaces of the Shenango and Mahoning Valleys gave an impetus to the coal trade of these districts. The coal was of a very superior quality as a furnace fuel, and indeed for every purpose to which coal can be applied. The vein lay in swamps or basins of limited area, and the coal had to be located by drilling at great expense, but when found, the fortune of the mining adventurer was made. During the Civil War the price ran up to seven dollars a ton.

The anthracite coal of Pennsylvania usually contains less than seven per cent. of volatile matter, and consequently ignites with difficulty, but when fairly started, produces intense heat and makes no smoke. It is very hard and compact, cannot be mined with the pick, and has to be blasted out of the solid. The coal is found mainly in six counties of Pennsylvania, namely: Schuylkill, Luzerne, Carbon, Northumberland, Dauphin and Columbia, and the whole of the area holding it, is less than 500 square miles. As a domestic fuel, this coal has no equal in the world. One of the seams — the mammoth vein — rises to the extraordinary thickness of fifty feet or more. The veins are met at every conceivable pitch, from horizontal to perpendicular, the strata having become involved in the upheaval of the Allegheny Mountains, which occurred at the close of the carboniferous age.

Mining in this field began in 1820, the Lehigh Coal and Mining Company making the first shipments by canal in that year. Only 365 tons were shipped the first year. Two years later, shipments were made by the Schuylkill Canal. In 1828, the Delaware and Hudson Canal was completed to Carbondale. During the first ten years of the trade there were shipped 359,190 tons. In 1842 the first railroad penetrated the coal field. Developments now became more active, and mining operations were prosecuted in a more systematic manner. The proximity of the coal to the markets of the eastern seaboard, the extraordinary thickness of the vein and its superb quality have made the anthracite region of Pennsylvania the greatest coal producing center in the United States.

The first workers stripped and quarried the coal in open day — vast masses of the mammoth vein being exposed at Summit Hill, near Mauch Chunk; the open cut near Wilkesbarre; at Holyrood; near Hazleton, and other points. When underground mining became necessary the coals above water level were first attacked. A gangway was driven under cover

along the line of strike of the coal, and rooms or "breasts" opened at right angles to the gangway — the width of breast varying from five to twelve yards. In the steep pitching veins the coal flows by gravitation from the face to the chute at the entrance of the breast. Sometimes a breast will take a "run" — the coal breaking loose from the face without mining or other assistance from the miner. In the early development of the field, the miner who was so fortunate as to have a "run" had nothing to do until the run exhausted itself, and as he employed a loader, his turn was filled every day. Cases are on record where the lucky miner would take a trip across the Atlantic to visit friends, and return home without losing his turn in the mine. But the mine operator did not long permit the luxury — he appropriated the "run" to himself.

With the entrance of railroads into the coal fields, mining developments became exceedingly active. In ten years from the time the first shipments were made by rail, the annual output had risen to nearly 6,000,000 tons, giving employment to 10,000 miners and mine laborers. In 1853 the output had reached 11,000,000 tons, and in 1873, the year in which the Miners' National Association was organized, there were 22,880,000 tons mined, giving employment in round numbers to 50,000 miners and mine laborers.

When the rebel guns opened fire on Fort Sumpter, thousands of miners threw down their tools and volunteered their services in defense of the government. No class of American citizens responded more promptly, or more patriotically to the call of the president, than the coal miners of the United States. One of the regiments raised in the anthracite region was composed exclusively of miners — the 48th Pennsylvania Volunteers. It was this regiment, Colonel Pleasant, a mining engineer, commanding, that opened the mine under the Confederate earthworks in front of Petersburg, in the summer of 1864. The entry was driven under cover 500 feet, at the face



of which a cross-entry, eighty feet in length, was cut. Eight rooms were opened on this entry, into each of which a ton of powder was placed directly under the enemy's siege guns. Henry Reese, a sergeant of the 48th Pennsylvania, lit the fuse, but it went out after burning half way. Reese relit it, and at 5 o'clock in the morning on the 24th of July, the vast magazine exploded with a loud, dull, heavy noise, which was heard for miles. Earth, men and guns were thrown high in the air. The panic-stricken Confederate soldiers, beyond the reach of the blast, abandoned their guns and fled in all directions. A hundred and ten siege-guns immediately opened fire to cover Grant's assaulting columns, but owing to the cowardice and imbecility of the commanders, the enemy had time to rally, and, to use the words of Grant, "the effort was a stupendous failure." Had the respective corps and division commanders who led the assault been equal to the skill of the miners who opened and charged the mine, thousands of brave soldiers whose lives were sacrificed in the assault would have been spared, and Petersburg been captured before breakfast.

The Ohio River is the cheapest coal carrier in the world. The coal shipped from Pittsburg to Louisville, a distance of 600 miles, costs 47 cents per ton, including the return of the empty barges, the trip being made in five days. The freight from Louisville to New Orleans is 55 cents per ton, the distance being 1,400 miles. The trip is made in ten days.

The Monongahela River mines were worked for domestic use from the earliest settlement of the country. The coal cropped out in the hills fronting the river all the way from Pittsburg to Brownsville, and could be mined for the labor required to raise it with a pickax and crowbar.

One of the first shipping mines was located on Coal Hill, and was called "Indian Pit." The coal was tied up in raw hides, rolled down the hill to the river bank, where it was emptied into wagons, and the hides carried back to the pit mouth to be reloaded. Another mine opened in Coal Hill,

in those early days, supplied the steam foundry and machine works, and other local trade of Pittsburg. An improvement upon the primitive system of raw hide haulage was made by framing two saplings together to form shafts for a horse, a box being fastened at the rear end of the saplings.

The miner used a wheelbarrow in hauling the coal from his room to the mouth of the mine. He cleaned the coal with a hand rake, and was paid at the rate of 37 cents per ton for digging and hauling. The mines at Saw Mill Run were among the first opened by subterranean excavation.

Coal was in general use by the inhabitants of Pittsburg at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and was delivered to families at a dollar and a quarter per ton. The coal, loaded in wagons, drawn by four horses, was ferried across the river to Pittsburg. In the year 1818 the Monongahela bridge was completed, when transit across the river by that method ceased.

The first shipment to distant markets from this field was made in 1803, by a company of French merchants, who built a ship, named the *Louisiana*, of 350 tons burden, which was ballasted with coal that was sold at nine dollars a ton. In 1817 shipments began to be made down the Ohio River — Maysville, Cincinnati and Louisville being the principal markets.

The pioneer miners of the Monongahela early began the practice of using dogs to assist them in hauling their coal from the room-faces to the dump at the mouth of the bank. As new miners came, they adopted this practice, and for many years the miner and his dog were inseparable subterranean companions. The dog was harnessed up to the front of the car, the miner pushed behind. When they went back with the empty wagon the driver enjoyed the luxury of a ride. The dog laid down in the gob to rest while his master was loading up, and at the word of command came promptly forth, was harnessed and hitched to the loaded car. The dogs

were generally quiet and well-behaved, although when the men gathered together at noon for lunch two dogs sometimes engaged in battle over a bone; and sometimes, too, the owners of the dogs would join in fight. The owner of the losing dog would exclaim, "Take off your dog or I'll knock a pick in him," and the dual battle began.

The young miners in those days when looking for boarding, included their dogs in the contract — fifty cents a week being charged for the dog. Frequent quarrels arose between the landlady and the miner over the feeding of the dog. "My dog," the miner would insist, "has to work hard and must be fed on meat, or I will have to hunt another boarding house."

With the completion of the locks of the Monongahela River, which occurred in 1844, and the application a year or two later of steam tow boats for conveying coal down the Ohio River, an impetus was given to the trade which resulted in more elaborate arrangements for getting out coal. The mines were opened in a more systematic manner; mules were introduced for hauling underground, and the dog, as a miner, gradually disappeared. In some of the small mines of Ohio, on the Muskingum River, and the Cincinnati and Muskingum Valley Railroad, the system of using dogs lingered until the close of the nineteenth century as a reminder of the primitive manner of underground haulage in this country.

The mines of the Monongahela River region, owing to the low stage of water in summer, and the obstruction of ice in winter, were generally idle for several months of each year. This lost time had to be made up by extra effort during the working seasons — the miners going to work as early as 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, and working until 6 or 7 at night. Before the introduction of steam tugs for transporting coal to market, many of the diggers would, toward the close of the season, secure employment on the coal barges, and make a trip down the river, sometimes going as far as New Orleans.

The beautiful scenery of "LaBelle Rivier," and the majestic "Father of Waters" had no charms for the miner, whose ear and eye were forever employed in guiding the plunging coal barges in their mad career; the strain being all the harder from the awkward manner in which he went about his new, perilous and perplexing toil. Many a coal barge went to the bottom of the river in those days — as they sometimes still do — and occasionally the bargemen went with them.

In 1792, the Patterson Brothers, who were conducting a train of emigrants from the Dutch settlements of Pennsylvania to the Big Flat region in the neighborhood of Seneca Lake, in New York, discovered a vein of coal in the mountains, near the headwaters of the Tioga River, which has since become famous as Blossburg smithing coal. In 1806, Aaron Bloss, a native of the Hudson River region of New York, purchased a tract of land upon which coal had been discovered, and settling there, immediately opened a mine for its production. The place has since been known as Blossburg. Mining was continued in a desultory manner for many years, the coal being carried to market on pack horses, over what was known as the Williamson road, and was distributed to many points throughout New York and New England where the blacksmiths soon learned to prefer the Blossburg coal to the charcoal they had formerly used. An impetus was given to this trade when "Clinton's Big Ditch," the Erie Canal, and its tributary, the Chemung Canal, were completed and opened for navigation, and the consequence was the formation of the Arbon Coal Company in 1834.

About the same time the Tioga Improvement Company was formed for the purpose of improving the Tioga River, and making it navigable for river craft. By 1836 the obstructions in the river had been removed to within eight miles of the mines. Rafts of logs were made at that point, known as Canoe Camp, and were loaded with coal hauled in wagons from the mines. With every rise in the river they were

floated down to Corning, and thence over the Canal to New York and the Great Lakes. Logs and coal were both sold, and thus by the same process, coal and lumber were carried to market. The construction of the Erie railroad, built to connect New York harbor with the Great Lakes, reached Corning, New York, in 1838. The Tioga Improvement Company then abandoned its navigation scheme, and built a railroad to Blossburg. The rails used were sawed beams with strap iron nailed down on top.

The first coal shipped by rail was by the Arbon Coal Company in 1840. This company continued in business until 1842, shipping by rail in those three years, 49,633 tons, which was then considered a large product. W. M. Mallory & Company succeeded to the business of the Arbon Coal Company, but during the panic of 1857 the Mallory Company failed and went out of existence. It had mined in the three years it did business 405,116 tons.

About this time the salt companies of Syracuse, New York, began to appreciate the importance of coal for evaporating purposes. They invested heavily in coal lands in the Blossburg basin and developed large mines. Other men of great financial and political influence became interested in that field, among them Horatio Seymour, then governor of the state of New York.

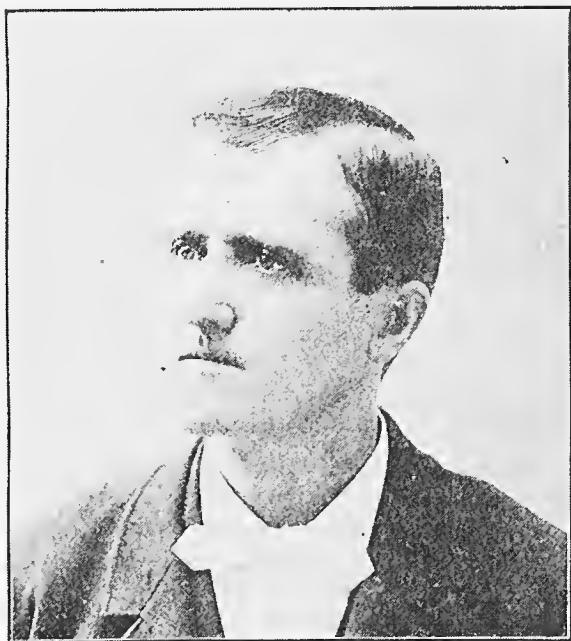
The Frostburg coal region of Maryland was opened in a systematic manner in 1842, on the completion of The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to Cumberland. The main bed of coal in course of development—the Big Vein—ranges in height from seven to fourteen feet, and belongs to the family of semi-bituminous coals. The northern end of the basin extends across into Pennsylvania, and the southern end into West Virginia. Jennings Run and Georges Creek have cut deep into the coal measures, requiring the construction of long and steep inclined planes to reach the coal, excepting at Frostburg, where a transverse ridge connects Dan and Savage

mountains without a break in the seam. This region was settled by Scotch miners, and is still inhabited by their descendants.

One of the mining villages of the Frostburg region was named Pompey Smash. It was laid out in 1851, and was owned by miners, who bought the lots and built the town. A large spring of limpid water flowed at what was afterwards Percy's mine, which the pioneer miners had utilized for transporting the coal to Cumberland, ten miles distant, and a thousand feet lower. Some of the coal was hauled in wagons and sold to the neighboring blacksmiths, by a negro slave named Pompey, who, on one occasion, had the misfortune to smash his wagon on the spot where the village was afterwards laid out; and it was named Pompey's Smash. Years afterwards the miners became ashamed of the name and had it changed to Vale Summit. It has produced some able men, of whom several have been mine inspectors of the state; others representatives to the General Assembly, and it has the honor of being the first town in the United States, south of Mason and Dixon's line, which raised a Republican flag, this being done on the occasion of Lincoln's first candidacy for the presidency. The flag was cut down by rebel sympathizers, but was raised again by patriotic miners, with shot-guns in their hands. The flag floated to the breeze for years until it was worn to shreds and patches. The staff was cut down, sawed into pieces and distributed as relics all over the United States.

Some of the pioneer miners of the Frostburg region still survive, but the great majority have been gathered to their fathers. These pioneers of the subterranean workshop of the Alleghanies were hard-working, honest men, whose ambition in life was to save enough money with which to buy a farm in the west, and scores of them did so, settling in Iowa or Wisconsin, where they carried their habits of perseverance, economy and thrift, and made up by the exercise of these

virtues for any lack of agricultural knowledge. They would go back to the mines in the fall of the year, after they had finished their harvesting, work all winter, and return home in the spring with money enough to buy needed stock. None of them ever returned permanently to the mines, preferring the broad expanse of prairie and the manly independence yielded by mother earth to the everlasting gloom of the coal mine.



RANSOM T. POWELL, "LITTLE RED CAP."

One miner, whose career was quite remarkable, was Ransom T. Powell. He was born at Eckhart Mines in 1848, and enlisted as a private soldier during the Civil War before he

was fourteen years of age. A year later he was taken prisoner in battle, and kept in the infamous Andersonville prison for eleven months. After the war he resumed work in the mines, and while digging coal at Eckhart mines, was summoned to Washington to give testimony in regard to the Morey letter, which played so important a part in the Garfield presidential campaign. A pretended accomplice of Morey, who claimed to be a detective of the Miners' Union of Maryland, had been arrested. Powell exposed him as a fraud, and caused him to be sent to the penitentiary. For this service, Powell was appointed to a government position, and was in the employ of the government at the time of his death in 1898.

Another miner who deserves a passing notice, was Andrew Spier, of Lonaconing. While a miner working on George Creek, he taught free night school. More than one young miner of this field who has made a success of life, owed his first inspiration to better his condition to the encouragement he received from the precept and example of Andrew Spier, who rose from the miners' pick to the presidency of one of the coal companies of the region. He was a fine scholar, and it was a rare treat to hear him read Shakespeare and Burns, whose poetry he could quote from memory with the power of a first-class actor.

Lonaconing is the largest mining town in the region, having a population of 7000 — nearly all miners. The village for many years had no government, but was as orderly and quiet as if it had been policed night and day. Nearly all the business men of the place were formerly miners.

The pioneer miners of Maryland were great disputants of those church doctrines which have divided Christians for centuries, and often in the murky chambers of the mines scenes of real life were witnessed similar to those described by Milton in "Paradise Lost."



"Others apart sat on a hill retired  
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high  
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,  
Fixed fate, free will foreknowledge absolute  
And found no end in wandering mazes lost."

The experts of this region are becoming alarmed over the exhaustion of the coal field. The alarm is causeless. There is coal enough to last for another century. The thin veins can be mined with profit, and will be attacked as soon as the great vein is worked out. They will give employment to more than the mining population of the present time.

Before the Civil War the miners of the Frostburg region were paid 28 cents per ton for run of mine coal, and 40 cents for riddled coal. The rooms were fourteen feet wide, the headings or entries eight feet; two men worked together in each room and entry. When riddled coal was loaded, one miner held the riddle in both hands, and the other shoveled in the coal. The riddlings were thrown in the gob.

During the winter of 1850-51 the operators proposed to reduce the price of mining to 25 cents per ton for run of mine coal, and required the miners to sign a bond to forfeit all money in the hands of their employers in case they should engage in a strike. Pay-day occurred on the 20th of each month, and as the miners worked two months and twenty days before receiving their first month's pay, there was always from a month and twenty days to two months and twenty days' time in the hands of the coal companies.

The miners called a mass-meeting to consider this proposition, at which it was unanimously resolved not to accept the reduction. They demanded the withdrawal of the bond, which they characterized as an insult to American citizenship. The operators would not recede from their position and the men struck. This was one of the first strikes inaugurated in the United States. During its progress the miners sent for

William Clachan of Virginia to manage the strike. Clachan, who had formerly been a miner's leader in Scotland, assailed the operators and threatened to cause the arrest of the mine superintendents for proposing to abridge the rights of American citizenship. The superintendents, on the other hand, threatened to arrest Clachan if he did not forthwith depart to his farm in Virginia. Finding that the miners were firm in their position the operators gave up the fight, and the strikers resumed work on the old terms after a six weeks' suspension.

The following year the branch railroad from Piedmont to Lonaconing was built, and a number of new mines were opened on George Creek. Miners were in demand. The price of mining was raised to 35 cents per ton, the miners of George Creek receiving 36 cents. In the early part of 1854, however, trade conditions becoming depressed, the miners were notified that a reduction to 30 cents had become necessary. The miners met this proposition with a demand for an increase to 40 cents, and a general strike followed, which lasted thirteen weeks, and resulted in the defeat of the strikers.

After the strike had progressed nine or ten weeks a break occurred at one of the mines at Lonaconing. A mass-meeting was called at the mine where the recusant miners had resumed work. The strikers, bearing banners with appropriate mottoes, one of which, carried by a delegation from Pompey Smash, had inscribed on it the determined motto, "Death or Victory — No Surrender — Forty Cents or No Coal." On reaching the town the strikers found the entrance of the mine where the men had resumed work, guarded by armed men, and a delegation of miners were refused admittance, at the point of the bayonet.

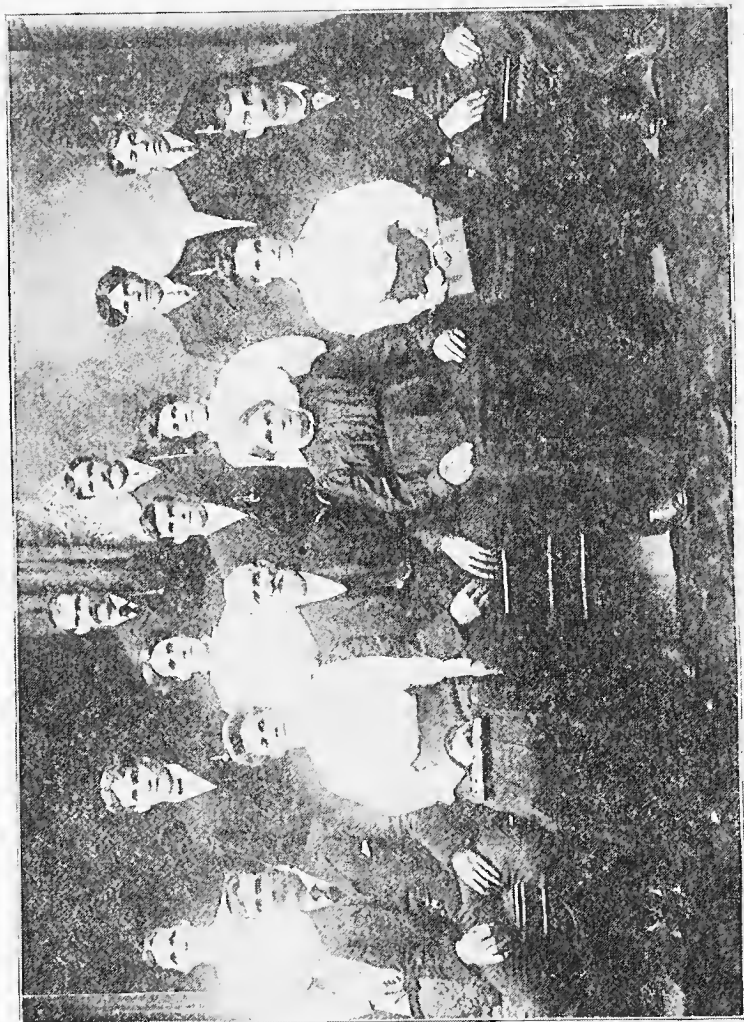
The committee returned to the meeting and reported the condition of affairs. The younger and more thoughtless of the strikers demanded to be led against the militia. More

prudent counsel prevailed, however, and a resolution was passed by an almost unanimous vote, not to provoke a conflict with the soldiers, nor to pay any attention to their taunts; but all were to return peacefully to their homes as good law-abiding citizens.

On returning through Lonaconing, the mine superintendent was met on the sidewalk armed with a cavalry sword buckled to his side. A returned veteran of the Mexican War, who had fought in every battle under Scott, a man of reckless courage, leveled a double-barreled shotgun, charged with buckshot, at the mine manager; but as he pulled the trigger a bystander raised the barrel with a stroke of his arm and the shot flew wild. The backbone of the strike was broken. After a few fitful attempts to keep the men together, all returned to work on the reduction.

Coal miners very generally have large families. The following cut represents John Stewart, his wife and 13 children, all living, the youngest being 22 years of age. Stewart was born in Scotland in 1837, and immigrated with his parents to the United States when he was twelve years of age. The family settled in Allegheny county, Maryland, and John Stewart, then a boy 12 years old, went to work in Eckhart mines, in the Frostburg coal field. He has lived in the same house for 47 years and mined coal at Eckhart for 55 years. He was one of the best coal miners in the Frostburg region, is one of the most highly respected citizens of Allegheny county, and is in good circumstances. His father was a British soldier, belonging to the 42d Highlanders, the famous "Black Watch." He died in 1876, aged 79 years, and worked in the mines until the day before his death.

In 1775 Louis Evans published a map on which the existence of coal is noted on the Tuscarawas River, in what is now the State of Ohio. A map of the western country, published in 1788, noted several sections of coal in Ohio. Harris, in



JOHN STEWART, WIFE, AND THIRTEEN CHILDREN, ALL LIVING, 1907.

his tour through the state in 1803, mentions seeing several seams of pitcoal on the banks of the Hocking River.

Samuel Wyllis Pomeroy, of Boston, purchased the lands on which the mines of Pomeroy are now operated, in 1803. The Pomeroy Coal Company opened mines in that district in 1833, and commenced mining in a systematic manner in the same year. This company built the first steam towboat, which was named the Condor, for transporting coal down the Ohio River. The scheme of towing coal to Cincinnati, a distance of 225 miles, was ridiculed as a visionary idea by steamboat men of those days, but the experiment proved a success, and two years later another tug named the Lake Erie, was built at Pittsburg. The Ohio River is now covered with towboats during the shipping seasons of the year.

Coal was mined by stripping near the village of Talmadge, in Summit county, Ohio, in 1810. In 1828 the first shipments were made to Cleveland by Henry Newberry, father of the late Dr. Newberry, chief of the State Geological Survey, in 1873-7. In recording this fact in my annual report as State Inspector of Mines, in 1877, I received the following letter from the boatman who took the coal to Cleveland:

PENINSULA, SUMMIT Co., April 8, 1878.

ANDREW ROY, Esq.:

SIR — Not long since I saw in the papers in your annual report, as State Inspector of Mines, that the first coal shipped by canal to Cleveland was in the year 1828, and by the late Mr. Henry Newberry, of Cuyahoga Falls, father of Prof. Newberry, of Cleveland. I took that coal to Cleveland. I was then in the seventeenth year of my age, and have resided in this place since 1824. There were three of us boys on that boat. One of them was about a year my junior, and now resides in one of the townships of Cuyahoga county, and became a successful inventor and business man. The other one was in the twelfth year of his age, and is now a lawyer with a lucrative practice in a beautiful growing city in an

adjoining state. On the first day of January last I made a New Year's call on Professor Newberry, at his home in Cleveland. A few years ago I presented Prof. Newberry with a lump of coal taken from one of the boat loads of that coal. As this whole transaction is somewhat remarkable, I have taken the liberty to write you about it, especially as we three boatmen are natives of Cuyahoga county.

Yours respectfully,

H. V. BRONSON.

In the early development of the Ohio coal field the prejudice against coal was so great that the Legislature, in 1810, offered a rebate of the rent to any of the salt workers of the State who would introduce the use of coal. In 1838, however, this prejudice was so far overcome that out of the twenty-six salt mines on the Muskingum River the majority were using coal.

The Ohio canal was completed to Massillon in 1834, and shipments were soon afterwards made to Cleveland from the Tuscarawas Valley. In 1832 only 1,550 tons of coal, all told, had been shipped to Cleveland. In 1845 the canal was finished to Youngstown, and David Tod, afterwards governor of Ohio, made the first shipment from his mines at Brier Hill.

The late President Garfield was a canal boat driver from the Brier Hill mines to Cleveland. He was then fifteen years of age, and had already given evidence of superior talents. Governor Tod, after the Brier Hill coal was introduced in the Cleveland market, found the demand so great that he was urged to ship a boat-load on Sunday. He went down to the canal to consult with the boatmen, and found them all, with the exception of the driver, engaged in a game of cards. Garfield was on the front of the boat by himself, intently reading a history of the United States.

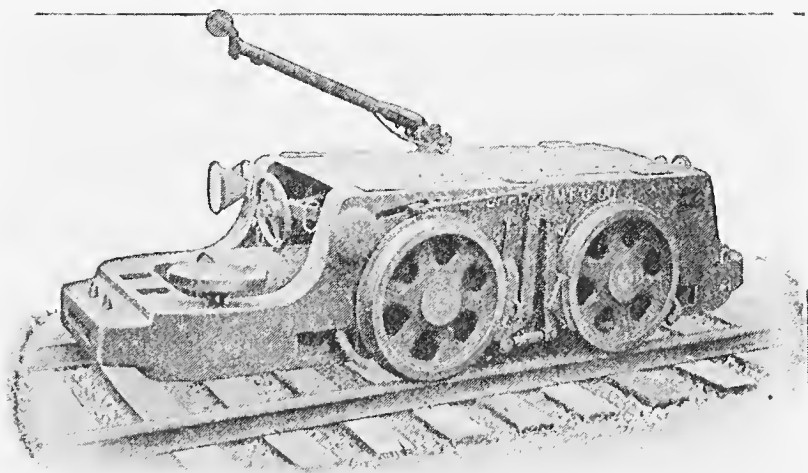
When Garfield was president a number of office-seekers organized themselves into a canal boat club in the confident hope that it would aid them in securing appointments under

his administration. They met with a rather cool reception. None of them had ever done an honest day's work in their lives, and their mock appearance as representative of workmen excited a feeling of contempt in the mind of the real canal boatman, which he took little pains to conceal.

The construction of the Hocking branch of the Ohio canal, in the year 1832, from Columbus to Nelsonville, gave an outlet to the coal of the Hocking Valley. Prior to this time, coal was mined for domestic purposes, and for the use of the neighboring blacksmiths. Hon. Thomas Ewing of Lancaster, a member of President Lincoln's cabinet, was connected with the company that made the first shipment from the mines of Nelsonville via the canal. Only the lower four feet of the vein was wrought. Twenty years later the roof coal was taken down and shipped to market. The best market for coal at this time was Newark.

In the State of Illinois coal mining began in St. Clair county in the year 1842. Prior to this time coal was mined for domestic use in this field, and at Peoria, Rock Island, LaSalle, and other points in the Prairie State. Coal was shipped to St. Louis from the Bellville coal field before the advent of railways, having been hauled by wagons. In 1855, shortly after the completion of the Illinois Central Railroad, shaft mining was begun at DuQuoin in Perry county. At this time railroad building was very active and during the next eight or ten years the coal fields of Alton, Kingston, Rock Island, Danville, Braceville and Braidwood were developed. Before the advent of the railroads coal was mainly used for steamboat purposes. Kingston, Peoria, Kickapoo Creek, west of Peoria, and Rock Island on the Mississippi River, were the first fields to be developed. Since the railroads were built, great industries have sprung up at LaSalle, Braceville, Danville, Kingston, Murphryboro, Spring Valley and numerous other points in the Prairie State.

In 1879 the output of Illinois had reached 2,634,163 tons, of which 798,810 tons were produced in St. Clair county alone. The mines of the Bellville tract, owing to their proximity to the St. Louis market were more rapidly developed than any others in the state. The pioneer miners of the Bellville tract were immigrants from the British coal fields who brought with them a devoted attachment to the principle of trade unions, their minds having been quickened and broadened by the agitation of Chartism—the first great political upheaval of the industrial masses for national reform in Great Britain.



UNDERGROUND MOTOR.



## CHAPTER V.

## FIRST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN MINERS.

**T**RADER unions are now organized in every department of industrial labor in this country. They first began to attract public attention in 1845, having been formed by British emigrants. These unions were looked upon with no favor for many years, being regarded as a foreign importation, and contrary to the genius and spirit of American institutions. The leaders of the unions were held up to the hatred and hostility of the public, and denounced as blather-skites and demagogues, too lazy to work themselves, and unwilling to allow self-respecting men to work.

But the trades unions had come to stay, and they have been increasing in numbers and power since the date of their inauguration, until now it can be said of the formerly despised leaders as Gaul Liscus said to Cæsar, "There are some whose influence with the people is very great; who, although private men, have more power than magistrates themselves."

The great upheaval of the Chartist movement in England in 1848, quickened the minds and awakened the ambition of the workingmen on both sides of the Atlantic. Although the movement was a failure for the time-being, it taught the English workingman the power of intelligent organization led by skillful delegates; and when he emigrated to the United States he carried the principle of organization with him to his transatlantic home, and preached it to his American fellow-workmen, who were willing listeners.

The political principles of the Chartists were embodied in the following six points: annual Parliaments, universal suffrage, vote by ballot, abolition of property qualifications for membership in the House of Commons, payment of members,

equal electoral districts. These points were copied from the American Constitutional System. In 1848, during a season of great depression, and under the stimulus of the French Revolution, the workingmen of Great Britain became excited to the point of rebellion. A mass-meeting was called for the 10th of April at which a half million of men were expected to be present with the avowed purpose of marching to the Parliament House with a petition which it was claimed was signed with six million names, to demand the enactment of the six points in the National Constitution.

The government became frightened—the militia was called out and put in command of the venerable Duke of Wellington. He made a skillful display of the troops to prevent the procession from marching to the Parliament House. This display of military power under so able and daring a general intimidated the Chartists and the movement collapsed. Thousands of these zealous reformers emigrated to the United States where the true spirit of liberty had been planted under the leadership of the Immortal Washington.

The first attempt at organizing the miners of the United States into a national union was made in the State of Illinois in the year 1860. In 1849 a local organization had been formed of the anthracite miners of Pennsylvania but its existence was of short duration. The leaders in the movement to organize a national union were Daniel Weaver and Thomas Lloyd, two English miners who had participated in the Chartist movement. Weaver, who was a man of very superior intelligence, and of lofty ideals, wrote the call for a national convention to meet in St. Louis in January, 1861. The following extract from this address shows the manly and correct sentiments which animated this pioneer of the American mines:

*To the Miners of the United States:*

The necessity of an association of miners and of those branches of industry immediately connected with mining

operations, having for its object the physical, mental and social elevation of the miner, has long been felt by the thinking portion of miners generally.



THOMAS LLOYD.

First President United Mine Workers of America.

Union is the great fundamental principle by which every object of importance is to be accomplished. Man is a social being and if left to himself in an isolated condition is one of the weakest of creatures, but when associated with his kind

he works wonders. Men can do jointly what they cannot do singly; the union of minds and hands — the concentration of their power — being almost omnipotent. Nor is this all; men not only accumulate power by union, but gain warmth and earnestness. There is an electric sympathy kindled, the attractive forces inherent in human nature are called into action, and a stream of generous emotion binds together and animates the whole.

Does it not then behoove us as miners to use every means to elevate our position in society, by a reformation of character, obliterating all personal animosities, and frivolous nationalities, abandoning our pernicious habits and degrading pursuits, and striving for the attainment of pure and high principles and generous motives, which will fit us to bear a manly, useful, and honorable part in the world. Our unity is essential to the attainment of our rights, and the amelioration of our present condition. Our voices must be heard in the legislative halls of the land. There it is that our complaints must be heard and our rights defined. The insatiable maw of capital would devour every vestige of labor's rights. We must demand legislative protection; and to accomplish this, we must organize. Our safety, our remedy, our protection, our dearest interests, and the social well-being of our families, present and future, depend on our unity, our duty, and our regard for each other.

In laying before you the objects of this association, we desire it to be understood that our objects are not merely pecuniary, but to mutually instruct and improve each other in knowledge, which is power; to study the laws of life; the relations of capital to labor, politics, municipal affairs, literature, science, and any other subject relating to the general welfare of our craft.

Come then and rally round the standard of union — the union of states and the union of miners — and with honesty of purpose, zeal and watchfulness, the pledge of success, unite

for the emancipation of labor, and the regeneration, physically, mentally and morally of our species.

Yours in behalf of the miners,

DANIEL WEAVER.

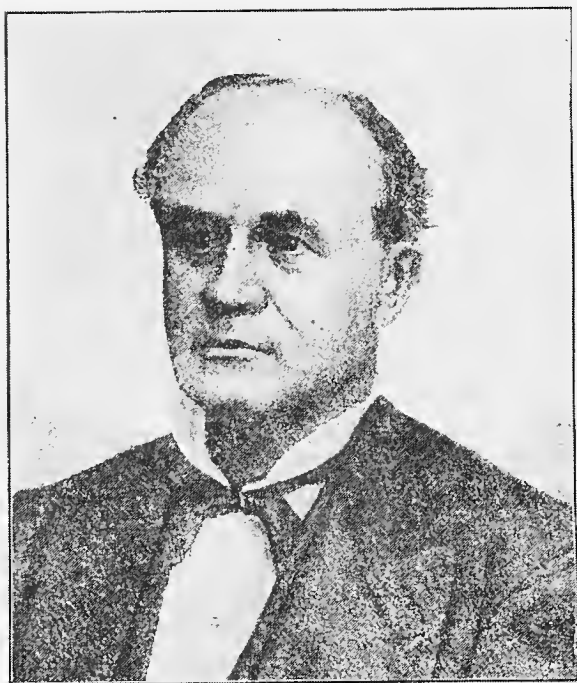
In obedience to this address a convention of representative miners met in the city of St. Louis, Missouri, on the 28th of January, 1861, and formed a national union of miners, which was named "The American Miners' Association." Thomas Lloyd was elected president, Daniel Weaver, who wrote the address, secretary, and Ralph Green, treasurer. The constitution, which was prepared by Weaver, whose mind was imbued with the lofty ideals of the Chartists, was prefaced by the following expressive motto:

Step by step the longest march  
Can be won; can be won;  
Single stones will form an arch  
One by one, one by one.

And by union, what we will  
Can be all accomplished still.  
Drops of water turn a mill  
Singly none, singly none.

The time for forming a national organization of miners was most opportune. The Civil War was about to break out, and draw the bone and sinew of the land into the army, making labor scarce and creating an unparalleled demand for coal. The union, therefore spread with amazing rapidity throughout every coal producing center in the United States. The officials published a newspaper, the *Weekly Miner*, at Bellville, the headquarters of the organization. John Hinchcliffe was selected as editor. He was an intelligent man, a ready writer, a good business man, and a devoted trades

unionist. In 1870 he was elected a member of the constitutional convention of the State of Illinois, and two years later was a member of the State Senate. Hinchcliffe was also the



JOHN HINCHCLIFFE.

second president of the American Miners' Association, having been elected to succeed Thomas Lloyd.

The Civil War, which drew a million of men of the best blood from the farm, the workshop, the mine, and other industrial pursuits, to save the life of the nation, made labor scarce at the mines, and gave an impetus to the coal trade it had never experienced before. Miners were in demand in

every region, and wages rose to three or four times their former value. The extraordinary prices which coal brought in the market stimulated the building of new railroads to undeveloped fields. The demand for experienced miners far exceeded the supply.

This unparalleled condition of the coal industry soon reached the ear of the British miner on the other side of the Atlantic. These men were the best miners in the world. Thousands of them, to whom the four elements of the ancients — air, earth, fire and water — brought no terrors, emigrated to the United States. They had been the recipients of the benefits of labor combinations in the mother country in the way of shorter hours, increased safety, better ventilation, educational advantages, and larger wages, and had become as strongly attached to the necessity and value of workingmen's unions for mutual protection as they were confirmed in the belief of a future state. Many of these men had been local leaders in the Miners' unions of England and a number had been lieutenants of Alexander McDonald, the leader and president of the Miners' National Association of Great Britain. They spread the gospel of unionism among American miners with great zeal and enthusiasm.

As long as the demand for coal continued brisk and commanded a good price in the market, wages were readily, by the watchful care of the officers of the American Miners' Association, and the aggressive spirit of the mine workers, kept up to the highest point consistent with trade conditions. After the overthrow of the rebellion, however, the vast armies which had been so largely drawn from the ranks of the industrial masses, returned to their former peaceful pursuits. Moreover numerous industries, which had been created as a necessity of the war, such as the manufacture of firearms, ammunition, naval vessels, armaments, etc., which consumed vast quantities of coal, were all shut down.

With a greatly increased number of subterranean workers and a greatly lessened demand for coal, competition became keen among producers. In those days there were no organizations among mining operators for maintaining a uniform price of coal. In making contracts on a dull market, one contractor more fortunately situated than another did not hesitate to cut prices. This meant a reduction of miners' wages, and a reduction of wages in one district was almost invariably followed by a reduction along the whole line.

When trade conditions are allowed to adjust themselves by the laws of supply and demand, the wages of workmen are the first to decline on a falling market, and the last to advance on a rising one. These conditions have caused many a miners' strike which would not have otherwise occurred. The miner looked upon a proposed reduction of wages as unwarranted and unjust when he was paying the coal company he was working for as much for the necessities of life as he was paying before the cut in his wages was made. If he asked for a reason why this was being done, he was informed, sometimes in a too peremptory manner that the company was the sole and proper judge as to what wages they could afford to pay their employees. The miner was far too pugnacious to be satisfied with such an answer. A general meeting was called, at which a resolution was offered and passed declaring a strike until the former rate of wages was restored.

This was the general condition of the coal trade and the attitude of the employer and employee in adjusting wage disputes in the first years after the close of the war. Fortunately the great depression in the business of the country which all thoughtful men foresaw must sooner or later occur in returning from the inflated conditions caused by the war to a sound business basis, did not immediately fall with crushing force. The evil day was deferred until the panic of 1873 fell upon the country like an avalanche. But the decline



in prices, gradual as they had been between the overthrow of the rebellion and the panic of 1873, led to the series of strikes which crippled and finally destroyed the national organization of miners called into being by the lofty address of the ideal Daniel Weaver. The leaders, as is too often the case in losing strikes, began to quarrel among themselves. *The Weekly Miner*, the official organ of the National Association, was sold to Andrew Cameron, a practical printer, and a devoted and earnest adherent of trades unions, who republished the paper in Chicago as the *Workingman's Advocate*. Cameron, was an able and incisive writer, and made the paper a power in the industrial world of the United States.

At the time of the formation of the American Miners' Association, coal mining was practically in its infancy in this country. Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, and Illinois being the only states in which the infant industry had made much headway. The anthracite region was then as now the greatest coal-producing center. Next in importance was the Monongahela River region. In Maryland the coal field was confined to a single county. Some headway had been made in the Mahoning, the Tuscarawas and the Hocking Valley, and at Pomeroy, Steubenville and other points in the State of Ohio. The developments in West Virginia were confined to Hampshire county, and the Great Kanawha River. Outside of the Bellville tract, the birthplace of the Association, Illinois had few <sup>in</sup> important shipping mines. In those days work at the mines was exceedingly irregular, and miners were of necessity of a roving and adventurous disposition, rarely remaining for any length of time in one place.

After the collapse of the National Association, organization was, for a time, in a stupor. But although the mining operators used every means in their power, in many cases making it a condition of employment that their miners would not join a union, the spirit of organization had taken such

hold on the subterranean workers that neither persuasion, nor the promise of special favors, nor the threat of being discharged, could induce them to renounce allegiance to the principle of combination. The fact that his employer sought to stamp out the principle was proof to the mind of the miner that it was right. Local combinations, therefore sprang, phoenix-like from the ashes of the American Miners' Association in all the coal-producing centers of the country.

In the reorganization of the unions a new and praiseworthy feature was incorporated in their constitutions, that of making provision for the relief of members injured, and for the care of the widow and orphan of those killed in the pursuit of their calling. Five dollars a week were allowed members who were hurt in the mines, or were suffering from sickness due to a visitation of Providence, during the time they were off work, and thirty dollars were allowed to defray the funeral expenses of a deceased member. But owing to the numerous and protracted strikes in which the unions engaged in the hope of arresting the downward tendency of wages, the exchequer of the union was too frequently in such wretched condition as to make it impossible to comply with this benevolent feature. When, however, there was money in the treasury it was given with a free and lavish hand to every call of woe, whether true or false, and when the treasury was empty members often went down into their pockets to share the last dollar for the relief of the widow and the orphan.

In Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio and Indiana, these unions were known as "Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Associations." They admitted to membership the outside laborers of mines equally with the subterranean workers. There was neither state nor national head to the organizations, but there was a skeleton of frame-work extending through them all, and when occasion required, the different districts acted in concert. The Illinois state union was called the "Illinois Miners' Benevolent and Protective Associations." This

organization also provided for the support of the injured, and for the burial of deceased members, five dollars a week being allowed for disability, and forty dollars for the burial of deceased members.

The mining districts of Ohio, more especially the Mahoning Valley, the Tuscarawas Valley and the Hocking Valley, were well organized in 1865, under the American Miners' Association, and kept wages up by a skillful use of the power which intelligent organization confers on workingmen. These miners were terrible fighters. It was a dangerous experiment on the part of their employers to attempt a reduction of wages without good and sufficient reasons. The Mahoning Valley miners were nearly all natives of Wales, passionately attached to combination as the only legitimate weapon the toiling masses possessed for wringing from their employers a fair and equitable share of the products of their toil. For a number of years after their settlement in the mining districts of the Mahoning Valley, the Welsh language was the only tongue heard at miners' meetings. This coal field, which for ten years following the close of the war was the greatest coal-producing district in Ohio, has been exhausted for a number of years, and the voice of the walking delegate is heard no more in the land.

During the brief existence of the American Miners' Association, combinations of workingmen for the purpose of securing good wages were exceedingly unpopular in this country. The true theory of the proper relations of labor and capital was held to be that the employers of labor had the sole right to fix the rate of wages, and to dictate the terms and conditions under which workingmen should have the right to toil. If the terms were not satisfactory to the workman, it was his duty to try elsewhere. Trades unions were held to be unnecessary, uncalled for, and contrary to the genius and spirit of American institutions. The press

of the country took this view, and used its powerful influence to stamp out the spirit of combination.

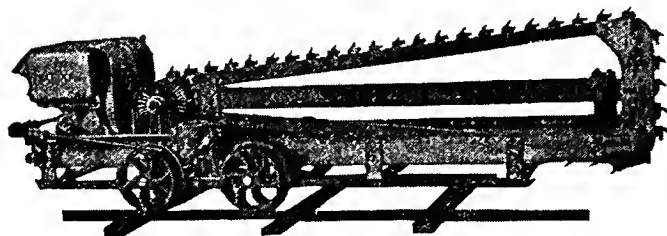
Miners' meetings were generally held in the open air, and the speeches of the orators in advocating strikes as reported in the public press were monstrous caricatures. The meetings were often described as lawless mobs, and the leaders denounced as ignorant, lazy loafers, who would not work themselves, nor permit others to work. Such unfair and uncalled-for treatment angered the miners. The presence of a reporter at a miners' meeting brought an angry frown to the brow of the subterranean worker.

This feeling of hostility was so bitter and pronounced that when as late as 1881 a co-operative company of miners was organized in the Bellville tract, the Southern Railway Company, on whose line the co-operative mine was situated, declined to furnish cars. The co-operative company had equipped their mine and secured a contract for ten cars a day, when they were informed that unless they agreed to accept the allotment of the St. Louis Coal Exchange they could get no cars. The co-operative company agreed to this; but when the manager of the Coal Exchange was approached on the subject he refused to allow them any cars on any conditions, because the members of the company had formerly engaged in a strike.

An appeal was made to the governor, who sent the secretary of the bureau of labor to confer with the railroad officials in St. Louis. Before the arrival of the secretary at the mine, the railroad company had ordered a gang of its employees to tear up the switch, load it on cars and ship it to St. Louis. The secretary then called on the railroad officials to inquire why the switch had been torn up, and was answered that when the railroad company was compelled to replace the switch it would do so, but not till then, and that it had no desire to furnish cars to a coal company which had engaged in a strike.

The opinion of the attorney-general was then asked, who replied that the only remedy the co-operative company had was a civil suit in law to force the railroad company to replace the switch. The little co-operative company, which had invested all its savings in the mining enterprise, was in no condition to engage in a lawsuit with so powerful a corporation as the Southern Railway Company. The miners surrendered their lease and abandoned their mining venture.

Notwithstanding the numerous ill-advised strikes into which the hot-headed leaders of the miners plunged the craft, organization was gradually gaining in public favor. The sacrifices which the strikers made in defense of their principles challenged the admiration of the American people, even if the policy of the strikers met their bitterest opposition.



COAL CUTTING MACHINE.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE WORKINGMEN'S BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION — THE  
SLIDING SCALE.

THE first attempt at organizing a miners' union in the anthracite coal field of Pennsylvania, occurred in the year 1849, under the leadership of John Bates, an Englishman imbued with the lofty principles of Chartism, which was then stirring the public mind of Great Britain. Bates was elected president of the association, and it took his name, being known as Bates' union. At that time a number of deep-seated grievances had been fastened on the miners, which the union sought to eradicate by a general strike. The miners lost, and Bates, who had become very unpopular, left the region. This was the first association of miners, and the first general strike that occurred in this country. The miners were so discouraged over their defeat that they allowed the union to go by default, and no further attempt at organization took place in the region for eleven years.

The miners of the Forrestville Improvement Company formed a local union in the year 1860. This was followed by the organization of other locals in other parts of the region. These associations exerted a powerful influence in securing advances in the wages of miners during the Civil War, when the operators, owing to the extraordinary demand for coal, were able to command fabulous prices, and could afford to pay high wages.

After the overthrow of the rebellion the market became sluggish; prices took a tumble, and the wages of miners were made a ready object of attack. In 1867 the operators north of Broad Mountain organized the Mahoney Valley and Locust Mountain Coal Association. The Southern District soon

afterward organized under the name of the Anthracite Board of Trade of the Schuylkill Coal Field. These two associations practically embraced all the coal companies of the Southern District. Their purpose was two-fold: First, to act in unity in making contracts, and second, to oppose the demands of the miners, who through their local unions had become bold and arrogant as the result of almost uniform success in raising wages during the inflated period of the Civil War.

Meanwhile the mining leaders were not idle. The formation of the operators' unions had spread alarm in their ranks. Their wages had been twice reduced since the close of the war, and they believed that the only purpose of the operators in organizing was to further reduce wages. In all the locals in the coal field men were discussing the necessity of a general organization under one head to circumvent the plans of the coal companies.

During the session of the legislature of 1867, a law was enacted at the solicitation of the workingmen of the state, making eight hours a legal day's work, to take effect on the first of July, 1868. The law, which was very distasteful to the employers of labor, contained a provision which had been inserted at their instance, making eight hours a legal working day *only in cases where there was no agreement to the contrary*. The miners had set their hearts on enforcing the law. They called a convention of delegates to meet in the early part of 1868 to form a general organization. The leading spirit in this movement was John Siney, of St. Clairsville, afterwards one of the leading trades unionists of the United States.

The convention adopted a constitution providing for a scale of wages; and liberal provision was made for the care of the sick and disabled miner, and for his widow and his orphan. Sick and disabled members were to receive \$5.00 a week, and \$30.00 were to be given for the burial of a deceased

member. The union thus formed, consolidated all the local unions of the anthracite coal field, and was named the Workingmen's Benevolent Association. The operators became alarmed at this movement of their workingmen, and used their influence to break it up, pointing out to their employees the folly and fatuity of combinations of workingmen, as the interests of both operator and miner were identical; that they were ready and willing on all occasions to listen to every grievance, and concede every just demand of their workingmen.

John Siney was elected president, and Goerge Herbert, secretary, of the association. Siney, who now loomed up as a commanding figure in labor circles, was eminently fitted for leadership. He was a man of undoubted honesty of purpose, a splendid organizer, and at the time of his selection as president, was well and favorably known to the miners of the anthracite region. He was born in Ireland in 1831, but was raised in England, and emigrated to the United States in 1863. He began working in the Eagle Colliery in St. Clair, Schuylkill county in 1867, and made his first acquaintance with a miners' strike, in which he took a prominent part, the same year.

Both miners and operators were now organized, and were watching each other. The war of opposing and enduring forces broke out by a demand of the W. B. A. for the enforcement of the eight-hour day. The operators declined to obey the law, and a general strike followed to compel obedience to its requirements.

After several weeks of enforced idleness, the strikers, by the advice of the general officers, returned to work on the old conditions. Although the strike was a losing one it taught the leaders a valuable lesson, which they were not slow to put to the test, namely, to restrict the coal output by a suspension as soon as the market began to be glutted. The demand for coal had fallen off largely after the close of the war, and



prices were constantly falling as a result. The miners' officials reasoned, and reasoned wisely, that if the mines were worked to their full capacity the market would soon become glutted; that a glutted market meant a fall in the price of coal, and when prices fell, the operators would reduce the price of mining. A reduction of miners' wages would only bring temporary relief. Even if the miners should work for nothing, over-production would result in time. The miners' officials insisted that as a measure of self-protection the remedy of restriction ought to be applied when wages were good rather than when they were bad. Accordingly, on the 20th of April, 1868, the following order was issued from the general office of the miners' union.

POTTSVILLE, PA., April 20, 1869.

We, the Executive Committee of the W. B. A., do hereby unanimously adopt the following resolutions, towit:

*Resolved*, That we, the Executive Committee of the W. B. A., do hereby give notice to all our employers and consumers of coal that there will be a general suspension of work to take place Monday, the 10th day of May, 1869.

*Resolved*, That all work will be suspended except rock work, tunneling and repairing; but no coal is to be cut under any circumstances.

*Resolved*, That the foregoing resolutions be published in *The Miners' Journal*, *The Pottsville Standard*, the *Workmen's Advocate*, and *Philadelphia Press*.

(Signed)

JOHN SINEY, *President*.

GEORGE CORBETT, *Secretary*.

This bold and startling document of the Miners' union, provoked endless adverse discussion in the newspapers, but the order of suspension was loyally obeyed by the anthracite miners, except at a few mines, where advances were offered and accepted. The suspension was denounced as a high-handed outrage by the consumers of coal, and threats were

made to appeal to Congress for the repeal of the duty on coal unless the officers of the miners' union would withdraw their arbitrary "act of tyranny." The officials, however, paid no attention, either to the criticism of the press or the threats of the coal consumers, and looked upon the fierce opposition which the suspension had called out as proof of the justice of their course. As a matter of business policy, the operators, who were opposed to the suspension, but were powerless to prevent it, encouraged the press to threaten the miners with a repeal of the duty on coal. But the miners had no fear that Congress would commit an act of such consummate folly, or that the operators seriously thought it would be done. The coal producers would have been the greatest sufferers, for the miners could emigrate, whereas the producers had millions of money invested in railroads and mines.

After the suspension had continued five weeks and the market had become depleted of its surplus coal, the following order for the resumption of work was promulgated:

OFFICIAL NOTICE.

MAHONEY CITY, PA., June 9, 1869.

WHEREAS, We, The Miners' Benevolent Association of the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania suspended work on the 10th day of May, almost unanimously; and,

WHEREAS, The object of our doing so has been to a great extent accomplished, towit, the reduction or depletion of the surplus of coal already in the market, together with the preventing if possible the enormous over-supply that was going to the market, therefore not only keeping the price of labor down to last winter's prices, but would eventually compel either a local suspension or reduction of wages, and in consequence local strikes; and, -

WHEREAS, The public press of the country in most instances, through which public opinion is formed and expressed, has denounced our association in this its first move-

ment, representing that we have designed to run up prices to an exorbitant height, and in some instances even threatened to appeal to Congress to repeal the tariff on foreign coal, therefore,

*Be It Resolved*, That we do not, nor have we desired to run the price of coal up too high in the market, but on the contrary, prefer a steady healthy market, which will afford to the operators and dealers fair interest on their investments, and at the same time that we may receive a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

*Resolved*, That taking into consideration the great risk and danger the miner and mine laborer has to incur in pursuing his daily occupation, we claim that we should receive pay commensurate with said risk and danger, and should not be stinted down to the lowest prices given to common laborers whose employments are safe and free from all risk to life and limb; and finally,

*Resolved*, That on and after the 16th inst. all districts or branches of districts, which can agree with their employers as to basis and condition of resumption, do resume work.

By order of committee.

JOHN PARKER, *Chairman*.

T. M. WILLIAMS, *Secretary*.

During the suspension, public sentiment among the miners, directed by John Siney, John Parker and others, favored resumption on a sliding scale, which was made a condition of calling off the suspension. The following scale was agreed on between miners and operators of the Schuylkill and Lehigh regions.

In the Lehigh region the scale was based on the selling price of coal at Tidewater, at \$5.00 per ton. When coal sold at \$5.00, miners were to receive 57 1-2 cents per ton in the mammoth vein and 15 per cent. advance when it sold for \$6.00 per ton. In the Schuylkill region the basis was made on the price of coal at Port Clinton, two miles below Potts-

ville. When coal sold at \$3.00 a ton, the same price per ton as in the Lehigh regions was to be paid to miners. For day work \$16.00 per week was to be paid in both valleys. If the operators chose to sell below the basis the miners' wages were not to be reduced, but were to be advanced .05 per ton when coal sold at Port Carbon at 25 cents above the basis price.

The following table shows the operation and results of the sliding scale in the Schuylkill region during the year:

June.....	10 per cent. above basis.
July.....	15 per cent. above basis.
August.....	35 per cent. above basis.
September ..	Basis.
October.....	10 per cent. above basis.
November.....	15 per cent. above basis.
December .....	Basis.

Under Siney's direction the first joint meeting of miners and operators was held in Scranton in 1869, at which time an agreement was reached, though not until the following year did they reduce their agreement to writing and attach the signatures of the officers representing both miners and employers. The following is a copy of the first signed joint agreement between miners and operators in America.

#### AGREEMENT.

"Agreement made at Pottsville, Pennsylvania, 29th day of July, 1870, between the committee of the Anthracite Board of Trade, and the committee of the Workingmen's Benevolent Association:

"It is agreed that the Workingmen's Benevolent Association shall not sustain any man who is discharged for incompetency, bad workmanship, bad conduct, or other good cause; and that the operators shall not discharge any man or officer for actions or duties imposed on him by the Workingmen's Benevolent Association.

"It is further agreed that the spirit and intention of the resolution (called the equality resolution) passed by the W. B. A. is that each man shall work regularly, and it is the place of the bosses and operators to see that he does.

"The resolution is that any miner earning above expenses over \$100 and less than \$125 per month, shall be reduced 10% on the basis and any miner earning over \$125 and under \$150 per month shall be reduced 20% on the basis. Any miner earning over \$150 and under \$200 per month shall be reduced 30% on the basis, and any miner earning over \$200 per month shall be reduced 40% on the basis.

"For obtaining the price of coal monthly, the president of the Anthracite Board of Trade and the president of the Workingmen's Association of Schuylkill county shall meet on the 25th day of each month and select five operators, who shall on the 25th following, produce a statement sworn to or affirmed, of the prices of coal at Port Carbon for all sizes above pea coal.

"The five operators shall be selected from a list of those shipping over 40,000 tons of coal annually and none shall be selected a second time until the list is exhausted.

"The price of coal so obtained shall fix the rate of wages for that month, and this agreement in regard to the mode of obtaining prices shall remain in force during the year 1870.

WILLIAM KENDRICK,	JOHN SINEY,
J. K. SIGFRIED,	GEORGE CORBETT,
M. P. FOWLER,	GEORGE ATTHEY,
BAIRD SNYDER,	JAMES BARRY,
SAMUEL E. GRISCOM,	ROBERT WEIGHTMAN,
Operators.	Miners.

This was the first annual joint agreement ever made between the miners and operators for the establishment of a wage scale. Fifteen years later the movement was revived

by Dan McLaughlin of Illinois, who brought the matter up in the convention held in the city of Indianapolis in 1885 which organized the National Federation of Miners.



THOMAS MCGUIRE,  
OF WELLSTON, OHIO, AGED 75 YEARS.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE AVONDALE CATASTROPHE. — THE ANTHRACITE  
MINING LAW. — ARBITRATION.

THE mammoth vein of the anthracite coal field frequently rises to the extraordinary height of 50 feet. This remarkable thickness, together with the steep inclination of the strata, make the occupation of the anthracite miner one of peculiar peril. The reports of the mine inspectors show that more men are killed per ton of coal mined than in any other coal field in the world. So numerous and heart-rending had these accidents become that the miners of Schuylkill county in the year 1858 appealed to the Legislature for the passage of a law to provide for official supervision of the mines, and a bill for that purpose was introduced the same year; but it found no countenance, and never came to a vote. In 1866 it was again introduced, and passed the lower house, but was defeated in the Senate. In 1869 it was reintroduced, passed both houses and received the approval of the governor of the state. It provided for one mine inspector for Schuylkill county, the other counties being left out.

The enactment of a mining law for the protection of the miners of a single county was an inexcusable blunder. The law had been in operation only a few months when the Avondale shaft in the adjoining county of Luzerne took fire and suffocated every soul in the mines including two daring miners who went down the mine after the fire, in the hope of rescuing some of the entombed men. The shaft had but one opening and the catastrophe was caused by the furnaceman, while lighting the furnace in the morning after the miners





had gone down to work. He used wood in lighting the fire and sparks from the burning wood flying up the shaft, set the wooden partition which divided the pit into upcast and downcast compartments, on fire.

The partition in turn set the immense wooden structures on top of the pit on fire. The whole underground force of the mine, 109 souls, were suffocated to death by the gases emanated from the burning woodwork in the shaft and the breakers on top of it.

The Avondale shaft is situated four miles from Plymouth, in Luzerne county, in the heart of the anthracite region. The catastrophe occurred in the forenoon of the 6th of September, 1869, after a long strike, the miners having returned to work that fatal morning. The fire was discovered at 9 o'clock by the stable boss who had descended with a load of hay for the mules. He immediately gave the alarm. A few minutes afterwards a cloud of smoke, followed by a mass of flame, arose through the shaft, which set fire to the breaker, and spread to the hoisting house, driving the engineer from his post.

Dispatches were sent to the neighboring towns, and the fire departments of Wilkesbarre, Scranton and Kingston hurried to the burning mine. Ten thousand people rushed to the scene to assist in the rescue of the entombed miners, but their aid was powerless before the burning elements. The whole of the immense wooden structure was wrapped in flames, which arose to a height of a hundred feet, swaying to and fro in the wind, and forming a terrific scene. The hoisting ropes and all the noncombustible material fell crashing down the shaft, followed by pieces of burning timber.

On the arrival of the fire engines streams of water were turned on the mine, but several hours elapsed before the fire abated. A band of rescuers were then organized to go down the shaft to attempt the rescue of the imprisoned miners. The shaft was found to be choked up with the fallen debris

to a height of forty feet, and it was sundown before it was cleared away. A dog was lowered to test the condition of the air. It was alive when withdrawn, but nearly overcome with the effects of the surcharged atmosphere. An hour later a miner was lowered, who soon returned nearly exhausted.

As soon as descent could be made with safety, a band of rescuers were lowered, who advanced along the main gallery about 200 feet, when they came upon three dead bodies. The main trap door was closed. The rescuers rapped upon it with clubs, and shouted with all their might. Receiving no reply they returned to the bottom of the shaft and were drawn to day.

Another exploring party was lowered, which soon returned overcome by the noxious atmosphere of the mine. A third corps of rescuers descended, and found the ventilating furnace still burning, and the gases emanating from the fire spreading through the mine. All efforts to extinguish the furnace failed, as the water from the hose could not be brought to play upon the fire, and all further attempts to explore the interior of the mine were abandoned until the furnace died out.

During the second day several attempts were made to enter the workings and find the miners, but the mine gases prevented any extended search. The third morning two dead bodies were found. At half-past six o'clock the whole force was discovered lying dead behind an embankment which they had thrown up to dam back the deadly gases.

Fathers and sons were found locked in each others arms. Some of the dead were kneeling in the attitude of prayer; some lay on the ground with their faces downward; some were found with clasped hands, and some appeared to have fallen while walking. All knew that the insidious influence of the surcharged atmosphere would soon cause death. They fell asleep in a painless stupor, the weaker dying first. .

No catastrophe ever occurred in this country which created

a greater sensation than this mining horror. The public press united in demanding the passage of all laws necessary for the protection of the health and lives of miners. The miners of the anthracite region, also, who were well organized at the time, held public meetings all over the coal fields and passed strong resolutions demanding that the incoming Legislature enact rigid laws for the regulation, ventilation and safety of all anthracite mines, and make provision for the inspection of the same by competent, practical miners to see that the laws were enforced and obeyed.

When the Legislature met in the following January a committee of representative miners, consisting of John Siney, Thomas H. Williams, and Harry J. Walls, was sent to Harrisburg to have a mining bill enacted into a law for the proper security of the lives, health and safety of the anthracite miners of Pennsylvania, which was promptly done.

The success of the suspension, the adoption of the sliding scale, and the enactment of the mining law, all in a single year, turned the heads of the miners and made the leaders arrogant and boastful. The operators were correspondingly hostile, and were busy with plans to break up the W. B. A. *The Miners' Journal*, B. F. Bannan, editor, which was published in Pottsville, in the interest of the coal trade, was bitter in its attacks on the Miners' union. Every issue of the *Journal* denounced John Siney as an ignorant demagogue, who had brought the coal trade to the verge of ruin. The miners, on the other hand, owned and controlled the *Anthracite Monitor*, of which John Parker was editor, but he was no match for Bannan in scurrilous abuse. The ill-tempered tirades against Siney, however, only strengthened him with the miners, and for that reason Siney enjoyed these attacks.

The miners, through the power of well directed organization, were masters of the situation, but the leaders of this new school of political philosophy had created a power which they were unable to control. In one of the thin veins the

miners asked for an advance above the scale rates, which was refused, and they struck. The strikers were arrested under the conspiracy laws of the state, found guilty of conspiracy and imprisoned. The success of these trials raised the spirits of the operators and soured the tempers of the miners. Both parties met in anger to adjust conditions for the year 1870. The Anthracite Board of Trade, which was resolved on a reduction of wages, proposed a basis of \$2.00 a ton. The Workingmen's Benevolent Association peremptorily declined to consider the proposition. The operators then passed a resolution to close the mines until the miners were ready to accept the \$2.00 basis.

In the northern and middle coal fields a compromise was effected, and work continued without interruption during the whole year. In the middle of January, the Board of Trade rescinded the resolution providing for a \$2.00 basis, and offered more liberal conditions, which were declined. The operators then closed the mines of the Schuylkill field, and a four months lockout resulted. In the month of July an agreement was reached on the \$3.00 basis, but provisions were made for wages to slide below as well as above the basis. Work was resumed in the Schuylkill field and continued until the close of the year without interruption. The sliding scale soon fell below the basis, averaging a reduction of 18% during the summer months, and 24% in the months of November and December.

These reductions were due to over-production; the glutted market brought down the price of coal, and a corresponding reduction in the price of mining. A sliding scale, without a basis below which wages cannot fall, will invariably result in lower wages, whenever the supply of coal is greater than the demand. In the anthracite region at this time, the supply greatly exceeded the demand. All the mines had been running full time since the month of August. At the close of



STARTING TO THE MINE.

the year, the markets were glutted, and the executive committee of the W. B. A. ordered a suspension.

During the past two years a bitter feeling had grown up between the miners of the Schuylkill region and those of Carbon and Luzerne counties, who had, during the suspension of 1869, and the strike of 1870, made special terms with their employers and continued working. The feeling between the operators of these districts was equally hostile, the operators of the southern fields regarding those of the northern districts as guerillas, for advancing wages above the scale rates.

In the month of November, the Executive Board of the Workingmen's Benevolent Association and the Anthracite Board of Trade met and arranged a scale for the year 1871, on the basis of \$3.00 per ton; but the miners of the Southern fields declined to abide by the terms of the joint convention unless the miners of Luzerne and Carbon counties would work with them in good faith; otherwise they would make such arrangements with their employers as would be for their own benefit.

The operators of the northern field had reaped a rich harvest during the preceding year, by keeping their mines working all the time of the suspension and strike, but they had lost money when all the mines of the coal fields were running and prices falling the latter half of the present year. They were no longer able to pay former prices, and proposed a reduction equivalent to 34%, and on the 10th day of January their miners struck. The whole region was now idle. After a months' strike, the Luzerne and Carbon county operators, believing that the general suspension would raise the price of coal as on similar occasions, offered to let the miners go back to work at the old price.

The mines were started up, but the strong and cunning hand of Franklin B. Gow<sup>an</sup>, president of the Philadelphia railroad, caught the guerilla operators by the throat. He raised the rate of freight to three times its former price;

other roads followed Gowen, and all mining operations forthwith ceased. The coal companies affected appealed to the Legislature for protection, the coal dealers joining in the movement. But Gowen, who was alike shrewd and unscrupulous, was master of the situation. The Legislative committee appointed to investigate the charge as to whether the railroads were not violating their charters in charging such enormous freights, found that they had not done so, there being no restrictions on the rates which they might charge. Gowen had bought a number of loads of coal from dealers in Philadelphia who were pursuing him, and had each load afterwards weighed on the city scales, taking the sworn testimony of the city weighmaster. Not one of the loads held out, one of them bought for a ton weighing only thirteen hundred pounds. This evidence he produced before the Legislative committee, which made the testimony of the coal dealers ridiculous.

Meantime the operators of the lower fields finding that the miners would not respect the joint arrangement of the committee of the Anthracite Board of Trade and the Workmen's Benevolent Association, proposed to treat with the miners direct; but they could not come to an agreement. The mine owners of Scranton hired non-union men with the object of breaking up the deadlock. A red flag flaunted in the face of a wild bull does not compare with the fierce native daring of a striking miner when he sees blacklegs coming to take his place in the mine. A crowd of excited strikers crowded around the non-union miners and drove them away. The sheriff of the county called on the governor for troops to protect the new miners, and a company of militia was sent to the scene of the disturbance.

By some means the strikers got possession of the arms of the militia, and marched to every mine that had started up with non-union men, and by threats and inuendoes of violence so intimidated the strangers that they left the mines and

could not be induced to return. The governor issued a proclamation commanding all riotous persons to disperse and threatening the tumultuous strikers with the vengeance of the state. He ordered out another company of soldiers, but notwithstanding the presence of more militia at the disaffected points, the strikers kept up the deadlock.

Sometime before the strike, Mr. Mundilla, a member of the British Parliament, and one of the most extensive employers of labor in England, had delivered a speech in New York on arbitration as a means of settling disputes between employers and employes. He recounted at length the manner of settling labor troubles, and the happy results that had flowed from arbitration in England. The speech attracted wide attention in this country. Eckley B. Coxe, of Drifton, Pa., read an interesting paper on the same subject at the ensuing meeting of the American Social Science Association in Philadelphia, and followed up the subject with a series of letters to the *Anthracite Monitor*, the official organ of the W. B. A.

During the strike Coxe exerted his influence to get the matters in dispute between the miners and operators settled by arbitration. John Siney was an ardent friend of this plan of adjusting labor disputes. Nothing stood in the way of deciding the questions at issue but the operators, who feared that the miners would not abide by the award of the judges in case the decision should not be to their liking. Coxe persevered in pushing the plan, and on the 17th of April a joint board of miners and operators met in Mauch Chunk to settle the various matters at issue.

The questions to be passed upon by the board were: The interference of the miners with the working of the mines, and with non-union men; the attitude of the operators toward the miners' union, and the questions of wages and the sliding scale. The board failed to agree, and Judge William Elwell, who had been chosen umpire, was called in, who decided that



the scale should be one cent for each three cents rise and fall in the price of coal; the basis was made two dollars and seventy-five cents; but after coal fell to two dollars and twenty-five cents wages were not to fall any farther. All future disputes were to be settled by arbitration.

The decision of the umpire was satisfactory to both interests, and work was at once resumed at the mines. It was believed that the era of strikes had disappeared, with all the bitterness of feeling which they engendered, but this was not to be. The miners of the anthracite regions were a heterogeneous mass, less self-respecting and self-governing than they are now. They had, under the consummate leadership of John Siney, beaten their employers in every contest the two preceding years, and in consequence had become arrogant and domineering.

In September, the outside laborers of the Thomas Coal Company made a demand on their employers, in flagrant violation of the awards of the umpire for an advance of wages to correspond to the basis of 1870, which the company granted. Other outside men made similar demands, which were complied with. When the price of coal fell below two dollars and seventy-five cents the miners at one of the mines declined to accept a corresponding reduction. Siney and other honorable leaders appealed to the men to respect the award of the umpire, but no attention was paid to their appeals. It is an easy matter to organize a miners' union when work is good and wages high, but it is a much more difficult matter to control a turbulent constituency, composed of various undisciplined nationalities. That John Siney was able to hold the anthracite miners together as long as he did and wring one concession after another from the strongest and most powerful corporations in the United States, stamps him as one of the greatest labor leaders this country has produced.

On the 27th of May, 1871, another heart-rending accident, similar in character to the Avondale catastrophe, occurred at West Pittston, in the anthracite region, by which twenty miners lost their lives. The mine, which was a shaft opening, had but one means of escape, and was working but twenty men until an escapement shaft was completed. Ventilation was provided by a fan; one of the journals of which became so heated as to set the woodwork covering the pit's mouth on fire. The fire soon spread to the immense structure surrounding the shaft. The cagers and two trapper boys, who were at the bottom of the pit were notified of the danger. One of the trapper boys volunteered to go back into the workings and notify the miners. The cager and the other trapper were drawn up before the flames drove the engineer from his post, but the brave little boy who ran into the interior of the mine perished, together with the men he sought to rescue, from the effects of the gases generated by the burning woodwork of the shaft.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE MOLLIE MAGUIRES. — COLLAPSE OF THE WORKINGMEN'S  
BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION.

THE anthracite region had been infested for several years by a desperate class of men, banded together in secret, oath-bound association, known as "Mollie Maguires." The order was composed of men of Irish birth or descent, who professed to belong to the Catholic faith, none other being eligible to membership. The society originated in Ireland, having been formed after the struggle to liberate Ireland from British yoke, under the leadership of the brave and patriotic Robert Emmett. The purpose of the association seems to have been to frighten tyrannical landlords. The "Mollies," dressed like women, laid in waiting for their victims, which they assaulted with staves.

The organization, which had been transplanted to the anthracite region of Pennsylvania by Irish immigrants, soon became subject to the control of the worst elements of this nationality. A number of murders had been traced to the "Mollies," but in the trials which followed alibis had been sworn to by members of the order. The vengeance of the "Mollies" was directed mainly against mine bosses and superintendents who had incurred their ill-will. Breakers were sometimes burned to gratify a grudge against a coal company, but murder rather than incendiarism inspired these wicked men. The clergy of the Catholic church exerted their powerful influence to break up the organization and bring the guilty parties to trial; but neither the humane labors of the priest nor the terrors of excommunication had any effect on the hardened "Mollies." They met in secret places and

under the influence of intoxicating liquor planned incendiarism and murder.

Frank B. Gowen, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, was the moving spirit in bringing these hardened men to justice.

A detective named James McParlin, himself an Irishman, and a member of the Catholic faith, was sent by the Pinkerton Agency of Chicago at the instance of Gowen into the coal field. McParlin assumed the name of James McKenna, and joined the society. By loud protestations of devotion to the wildest excesses of the order, he gained the unbounded confidence of the leaders. He was elected secretary of the Shenandoah division of the society and was bold and outspoken in all its wicked purposes. He remained a member of the order for three years, reporting to his chief by letter nearly every day. He was sometimes suspected of being a spy, but by the use of his strong right arm and his glib tongue regained the confidence of his wicked associates. At length his true character as a detective came to the knowledge of the "Mollies," and he made haste to get out of the coal fields, standing not on the order of his going, but going at once.

The mass of testimony which the detective had furnished the Pinkerton Agency was placed in the hands of the prosecuting attorneys of the counties in which the misdeeds of the society had been committed, and seventy arrests followed in quick succession. Twelve of the accused were convicted of murder in the first degree, four of murder in the second degree, four of accessory murder, and six were convicted of perjury. Some of the accused turned state's evidence and saved their necks.

During the reign of the "Mollies," a feeling of insecurity and terror pervaded the whole anthracite coal region, but no sooner were the arrests made than this feeling was replaced by indignation and cries of vengeance. The trials occurred under this intense excitement and a number of convictions

were made which under a lessened strain of public feeling would probably have resulted in acquittal. The pendulum had swung too far to the left and it rebounded too far to the right.

The Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association was publicly accused of being accessory to the crimes of the "Mollie Maguires." There never was a more groundless accusation. Many of the "Mollies" were members of the M. and L. B. A. as they were members of the Catholic Church, but both the Miners' union and the Catholic Church frowned down these acts of incendiarism and rejoiced in common with all good and law-abiding citizens when the perpetrators were arrested and convicted. With the conviction and execution of the misguided "Mollie Maguire" leaders, the society disappeared from the anthracite coal region and was never heard of afterwards. It left a temporary stain on the good name of the Irish race, which has long been effaced.

With the conviction and punishment of the "Mollie Maguires," a feeling of security returned to the region. Mine bosses and superintendents no longer found it necessary to carry firearms to protect themselves from the prowling assassin, the night-watchman was no longer needed at the breaker. Peace and security took the place of turmoil and danger. None welcomed the change more than the law-abiding and religious element of the miners of Irish nativity and descent.

The conflict of the two great combinations which sought to regulate the price of labor, however, went on with all its old-time energy and bitterness of feeling. The mining companies having learned a valuable lesson from the tactics of the miners, now took the initiative in restricting the coal supply. In the fall of 1873, they formed a powerful combination to keep the market depleted of surplus coal for the purpose of maintaining prices. This was the year of the

panic, when the demand for coal fell off forty per cent., but by carefully keeping the market depleted by suspensions, the coal companies were able to pay prevailing prices until the beginning of 1875. Meanwhile, John Siney had resigned the presidency of the W. B. A. to accept that of the Miners' National Association, which was organized in October, 1873. Siney was succeeded by John Parker, the editor of the *Anthracite Monitor*, a man of spotless character and possessed of more than ordinary ability, and it was no fault of his that wages were reduced in 1875.

On the first of January of that year, the Operators' union proposed a reduction of wages ranging from ten to twenty per cent. in the Schuylkill district, fifteen per cent. to twenty per cent. in the Lehigh Valley, and to change the manner of selecting the mines upon which the monthly basis was made, which still further reduced wages. The miners in the northern fields accepted the reduction, but those of the Schuylkill and Lehigh Valleys struck. This strike is still known in the region as the "long strike." The operators, who were combined in solid phalanx, were resolved at whatever sacrifice to defeat the miners and break up their formidable organization, which had so often in the past presented an impenetrable front to their plans for reducing wages. The miners on the other hand were as determined as their opponents to retain present rates, even if it should require a strike of six months to accomplish it.

The strike, as a general thing, was conducted in an orderly manner. On one occasion the militia was called out but was not needed, and soon returned home. Weeks and months rolled by and still neither side showed a disposition to yield.

The miners made heroic sacrifices such as they had never made before to win the strike. In the closing weeks of the contest there were exhibited scenes of woe and want and uncomplaining suffering seldom surpassed. Hundreds of families rose in the morning to breakfast on a crust of bread

and a glass of water, who did not know where a bite of dinner was to come from. Day after day, men, women and children went to the adjoining woods to dig roots and pick up herbs to keep body and soul together, and still the strike went on with no visible sign of surrender. But workmen must work that they may eat, and must eat that they may work, while capital can wait. The end came in the unconditional surrender of the miners. The force of nature could no further go.

The strike lasted seven months. The miners were beaten along the whole line, and with their defeat, the great organization known as the Workingmens' Benevolent Association was so completely demoralized that it went to pieces. The miners were wholly at the mercy of the great corporations and were obliged to accept any terms which their employers saw fit to impose upon them. They were even compelled to sign away their rights, which had been secured by an act of the Legislature, of having the coal weighed instead of measured.

The Workingmens' Benevolent Association, so formidable in its day, committed some mistakes, but did much good. It was handicapped by the lawless element within its ranks, which it sought to control in vain. The union was composed of a heterogenous mass of workmen of various nationalities, inspired with race prejudices, many of whom were ignorant and brutal and could see no redress for any grievance, real or imaginary, except by the use of physical force. The law-abiding and the lawless element were not in sympathy. One party desired success by lawful means, the other by the use of the assassin's knife and pistol, and the law-abiding element had to bear the odium of the misdeeds of the lawless element.

The W. B. A. was modeled after the Workingmens' Benevolent Society of Carbon County, which was organized in 1864, although the association was always known as the W.

B. A., and had received the charter from the Schuylkill County Court as the "Workingmens' Benevolent Association of St. Clair." Its name was changed to the Miners' and Laborers' Association in 1870 and the union was granted a charter by the Legislature, bearing that name, but the association was always known by its former name.

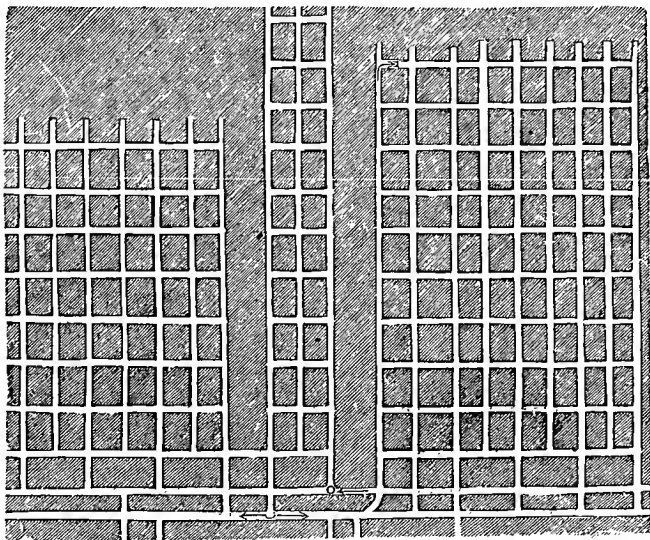
Outside of what the organization considered a fair day's wages for a fair day's work, and for the maintenance of which it was ever ready to fight, there were a number of grievances which it sought to eradicate. One of these was deep-seated and of long standing, and was known as the company or truck store system. Prior to the formation of the union, employment in the mines was generally conditioned on the miners dealing in the company's stores. Twenty to thirty per cent. more was charged for goods than obtained at other stores where competition was free.

As early as 1834 the company store system was made the subject of investigation by order of the Legislature. In 1842 it had become so oppressive to the miners of the region as to cause a strike, which was accompanied by riotous demonstrations. In 1863 its abuses attracted the attention of Governor Curtin, who referred to them in his message to the Legislature, and recommended the enactment of a law to abate them. The W. B. A. made war on the system and drove it out of the region; but with the panic of 1873 it returned and took a new lease of life. Since that time, laws have been enacted in many of the states to abolish it, but notwithstanding these laws bristle over with severe pains and penalties, it still prevails in a greater or less degree wherever coal mining is carried on in the United States. The profits which accrue from it, tempt the coal companies to violate the law, or to evade its spirit, if not its letter. The anthracite miners started a number of co-operative stores while the W. B. A. was in the zenith of its power, with a purpose of destroying the truck system, all of which with one or two



exceptions, were short lived. They flourished for a time, but were engulfed in the panic of 1873.

It is passing strange that so few permanent successes have been scored by the workingmen of the United States who have ventured on the sea of co-operation with the eminently successful example of the Flannel Weavers of Rockdale, England, to guide and direct them. In 1843, forty weavers who had failed to secure an advance of wages conceived the idea of banding together to start a store on a co-operative plan, with the object of lessening the cost of living, to make up for



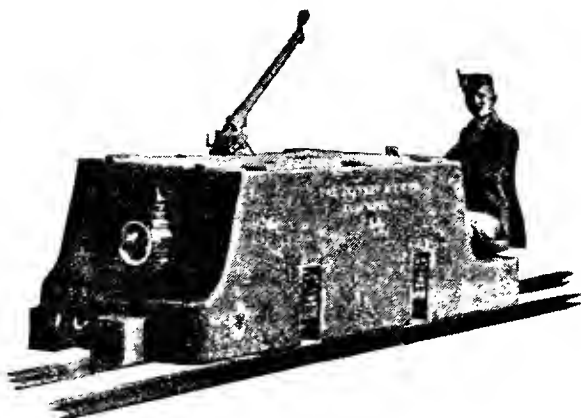
SECTION OF UNDERGROUND WORKINGS UNDER DEEP COVER.

the advance of wages which had been denied them. They were utterly poor, and were only able to put \$50 into the enterprise. With this capital they purchased a barrel of salt, a few pounds of butter and some oatmeal. The little store prospered in an extraordinary degree. At the end of ten

years the business of the company reached the enormous amount of \$380,000.

The association branched out into other departments of trade, established a newspaper which they called the Co-Operative News, and also a library and reading room containing twenty thousand volumes.

A noteworthy feature of the constitution of the W. B. A. was the provision for the care of the sick and the injured, and for the burial of the dead, and that a stranger might find the kind attention and fostering care of a brother who needed assistance, and be encouraged in resolutions of morality and sobriety at all times. Vast sums were paid out of the treasury to aid the sick, which were not always judiciously expended.



MINE LOCOMOTIVE.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE BLOSSBURG REGION. — A SAD ACCIDENT IN  
MAHONING VALLEY.

THE first great strike in the Blossburg district of Pennsylvania occurred in 1865, and lasted nine months. In 1863 a local of the American Miners' Association was organized, and through its efforts, and the great demand for coal incident to the Civil War, the price of mining was increased from thirty-five cents to a dollar and ten cents a ton.

In 1865 a demand was made for fifteen cents per ton increase. The companies interested refused to concede the price, and a strike followed, involving all the miners at Blossburg, Morris Run, and Fall Brook, which were then the only mines in the region. The companies posted notices that work would not be resumed until the men signified their willingness to sign an agreement not to belong to any union. At Morris Run and Fall Brook the operating companies owned all the land and all the houses, and in fact everything in the region except in the town of Blossburg. The strikers were immediately notified to vacate their houses. Under the law, as it then existed, the householders could not be evicted in less than ninety days time, and even then by giving the necessary bond and taking the ordinary stays and appeals, they could not be evicted for a year or more. The Legislature being in session, the coal companies sent a lobby to Harrisburg, headed by Henry Williams, who afterwards became judge of the supreme court of the state, through whose influence the act, since known as the "Ten Day Lease Act," was passed by the Legislature and signed by the governor.

The local courts decided that it was retroactive, and writs of ejectment were immediately issued and steps taken to evict the strikers.

When the sheriff and his deputies arrived for the purpose of evicting the families, the male population of the towns was nowhere to be found, but the women and children made it so uncomfortable for the sheriff and his posse that he returned to Blossburg and telegraphed the governor for troops to assist him. The famous Bucktail regiment, which was then returning from the front, and had not yet been mustered out, was sent to the sheriff's assistance. Most of the veterans were workingmen and sympathized with the strikers; nevertheless they performed the distasteful duty of guarding the sheriff and his posse while he took the goods out of the various houses and put them on the train for transportation to Blossburg.

The sheriff was busy taking out the goods from one house, and among other things that had to be removed, was a barrel of flour that had just been opened. It had to be handled with reasonable care, in order to prevent the flour from being spilled. Several women were in the house with the woman whose goods were being evicted, who kept up a continual cross-fire of remarks, not at all complimentary to the sheriff or his assistants. Some light remark was made, and the sheriff bent over the barrel of flour, his mouth wide open with a loud laugh. While in that position, one of the women, Mrs. Arrowsmith, sprang forward and quickly filling her hands with flour from the barrel, threw the contents full into the mouth and face of the sheriff. The act was so suddenly done, and the sheriff's mouth and throat so thoroughly filled, that he was nearly choked before the air passages could be cleared of the dry and sticky flour. The deputies and the Bucktails laughed until their sides were sore, but it was no laughing matter to the sheriff. Warrants were issued for the arrest of Mrs. Arrowsmith and two of her associates, and

they had to remain in hiding until after the strike came to a close.

The evictions, instead of breaking the strike as had been hoped by the operators, seemed to make the strikers more determined than ever to win, and several months passed before negotiations were opened for a renewal of work. Their resources having been exhausted, the miners were forced to accept the terms of the operators, which were that the miners should withdraw from the union and accept twenty cents per ton less for mining coal, instead of fifteen cents per ton of an advance. Many of the best men were victimized, and those that still survive, or the descendants of those that have passed away, can be found in every mining region of the country.

In 1866 the Blossburg Coal Company began developing a large tract of coal land four miles west of Blossburg, building a town of about five hundred houses, in which was domiciled a population of about two thousand nine hundred. The town was named Arnot, in honor of the first president of the company. Most of the men engaged in operating mines in the Blossburg field were also engaged in banking. Consequently the panic of 1873 fell with an intensified fury on mining operations. The distance between pay days gradually became greater, and when the 20th of November, 1873, arrived, the miners had not yet received their pay for September. Discontent was everywhere prevalent, and additional fuel was added to the flame by a notice posted at that time, notifying the miners of a reduction in wages of ten cents per ton. The notices further stated that the company stores would be kept open so that the miners could get such goods as they needed to the value of the wages earned by each of them, but no payment of wages would be made in cash until the following April.

In the rapid growth of the region during the previous three years, many men had come in from the anthracite region,

who were members of the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association. The success of that organization, under the leadership of John Siney, was attracting general attention. The excitement created by Siney's success resulted in a call for a meeting of the miners at Arnot on the evening of November 22nd, and a lodge of the M. & L. B. A. was organized in the Blossburg district, composed of earnest men, some of whom have since risen to prominence in miners' organizations. The three large companies operating in Tioga county at that time were the Blossburg Coal Company, the Morris Run Coal Mining Company and the Fallbrook Coal Company. The Morris Run and Fallbrook companies undertook to destroy the organization, and insisted that their employes should sign an ironclad agreement not to join the union, or leave it if they had already done so. The mine workers declined, and a fourteen weeks' strike ensued. After the strike had been on nine or ten weeks the companies imported a large number of Swedes to take the place of the strikers. The new miners were taken to a large barracks, or boarding house, prepared for them at Arnot, and were surrounded by special constables sworn in by the coal companies for that purpose.

The strikers gathered on the public highway in front of the barracks, and insisted on the right to talk with the strike-breakers through one of their interpreters, to explain the situation. The managers declined to allow this to be done; but finally a Swedish miner got in among them, and within an hour afterward, the whole of the imported men marched out on the highway, and joined the strikers. The strangers were formed in line, with a Scotch piper at their head, who marched them out of town to the stirring tune of the "McGregor's Gathering." When they reached Blossburg, four miles distant, a general mass-meeting and jollification was organized; the imported men were housed and fed, and next morning were deported.

Shortly after the Swedes left, negotiations were opened for a settlement of the strike, which resulted in the miners securing every point they asked for. Prior to this time the miners of Tioga county had been paid to a great extent in store orders and company scrip. The scrip passed current in the community as money, but at a discount, except at the company's store, where it was accepted at its face value. When farmers came into the mining towns with their produce, prospective purchasers would ask them, "Will you take scrip?" And if the answer was in the affirmative, a dicker would immediately be entered into as to the amount of discount allowed. The scrip commanded from seventy to ninety cents on the dollar.

During the strike, the Business Men's League of Blossburg, acting in conjunction with the miners' committees of Fall Brook, Morris Run and Arnot, called the attention of the Treasury Department of the United States government to the fact that this scrip was being issued by corporations and passed as money. The government commissioner was immediately sent to Tioga county to investigate the matter, and a decision was made that the tax levied by the United States government on all paper issued by corporations or individuals, and circulated as currency, applied to this scrip. A great deal of attention was attracted to the strike, and the Secretary of Internal Affairs of the State of Pennsylvania sent John Tomlinson to investigate the situation and report his findings to the governor. His report was entirely favorable to the miners, and to his influence a great measure of credit is due for the successful termination of the strike. During the suspension the miners and their families who were again evicted found shelter in shanties erected for the purpose in Blossburg. The following is a copy of one of the notices posted by the coal companies:

"MORRIS RUN, December 11, 1873.

"Notice is hereby given that on Saturday, the 13th inst., this company will pay all their miners for September who

do not belong to the miners' union proposed in Tioga county, Pennsylvania,, and who pledge themselves not to join the same. Also, that we will pay up all miners, who do not belong to the said union, in full, as soon as they are ready to settle up their accounts and vacate their houses.

"All miners employed by this company will be expected to give satisfactory replies to the following questions:

"1st. Are you a member of the union of miners proposed in Tioga county, Pennsylvania, or any society of a similar character?

"If the party is not a member, then he will be asked:

"2nd. Are you willing, and do you pledge yourself not to join any such society?

"If the party is a member, he will be asked:

"3rd. Are you willing, and do you pledge yourself to dissolve your connection with such society without delay, and not to join the same again?"

"The companies will protect all men working for them from violence.

(Signed.)

"MORRIS RUN COAL COMPANY,

"Morris Run, Tioga Co., Pa."

The strike was settled in the early days of March, 1874, and harmony was again restored between employer and employe. Until the middle of June the mines were operated every day. At that time they began to feel the effects of the depressed condition of the market and the tonnage fell off to about five hundred thousand tons annually, and did not regain its former volume until 1878.

Meantime many reductions had been offered by the companies and accepted by the miners until the same prices paid in the panic of 1857 had been reached. In 1877 the local unions of the M. and L. B. A. and the National Union which succeeded it, went out of existence. They were immediately succeeded by Local Assemblies of the Knights of Labor. In February of 1880, these Assemblies asked for an advance of



ten per cent. in wages. It was refused, and on March 1st a strike was inaugurated, continuing for seven weeks, when the price was conceded by the operators. The companies had learned by experience that no advantage came to them by evicting the strikers, and none were evicted in this struggle. In 1887 several strikes of short duration were engaged in, one for the privilege of electing check-weighmen, another for semi-monthly pays, one for ten per cent. advance, and still another caused by the refusal of the company to pay trapper boys the same relative increase that had been paid to other workers. The last named was the longest, lasting about two weeks. They were all won by the strikers.

In 1874 the local union of the M. & L. B. A. became a part of the Miners' National Association, and continued its existence as such until 1877. After the downfall of the National Association the organization continued without any head as a breakwater against the encroachments of the operators, and was later merged into the Knights of Labor.

During the existence of the W. B. A. the relations of capital and labor were not understood; the mining element was a turbulent one. The general public took sides against the miners, because of their proneness to strike, and the rage with which they assailed by innuendos of violence the strike-breakers brought in by the coal companies. The murderous society of the "Mollie Maguires" did much to array public sentiment against the miners' union, as Franklin B. Gowen and others, interested in defaming its good name, industriously circulated the report that the doings of the "Mollies" were the work of the miners' union. Public opinion took the position that the principle of combination of workingmen for the purpose of securing good wages was contrary to the spirit of American Institutions, and had no patience with an organization, the members of which not only declined to work unless their demands were complied with, but would try to induce others who were willing to work from doing so. A

strike was regarded to be unjustifiable under any circumstances. If men were not satisfied with their employers' terms it was their duty to leave and let others take their places.

All this is now changed. Combinations of workingmen are found wherever the wage system exists in the United States, and their leaders are now spoken of as citizens deserving the confidence of the public. The W. B. A. published a paper called the *Anthracite Monitor*, of which John Parker was editor, which although the public press of the region was arrayed against it, planted the seeds of that liberal sentiment which now acknowledges the wisdom and necessity of organization on the part of the industrial masses to protect them from the greed and power of capital, to better secure their rights both individually and collectively, and to uplift the condition of those who require a helping hand; or to quote the words of President Roosevelt, in his annual message to Congress in December, 1904: "Wage-workers have an entire right to organize, and by all peaceful and honorable means to endeavor to persuade their fellows to join them in organizations. They have a legal right, which according to circumstances, may or may not be a moral right, to refuse to work in company with men who decline to join their organizations. They have, under no circumstances, the right to commit violence upon those, whether capitalists or wage-workers, who refuse to support their organizations, or to side with those with whom they are at odds; for mob rule is intolerable in any form." These words of the president ought to be printed in letters of gold.

A sad accident occurred at one of the mines of the Mahoning Valley, near the village of Coalburg, in Trumbull county, Ohio, on the 21st of July, 1865, by which four men were imprisoned. They were working at night in a slope of the Brookfield Coal Company. About midnight a storm cloud burst over the slope, flooding the workings the whole

length of the main entry. The rooms of the butt entries where the miners were at work, were located on a hill above the reach of the flood, and the imprisoned men were all unconscious of their perilous situation until one of them started down the entry on his way home, about four o'clock in the morning. He was struck with consternation when he encountered a subterranean lake, and called to his comrades, two of whom were on separate entries but could not hear his voice. There were no means of escape until the waters abated, and all returned to their respective working places to await the action of the pumps, or the hand of death.

In the morning it was soon known throughout the valley that four men were imprisoned in the Brookfield Slope. All the miners of the region threw down their tools and made haste to reach the flooded mine to assist in rescuing their imperiled comrades. The mine pumps were worked to their utmost capacity, and treble rows of men, with water pails in their hands, were formed along the slope from its mouth to the water's edge. The pails filled with water were handed from one man to another, day and night without ceasing. As one gang became exhausted it was replaced by fresh hands. Never did men put forth more herculean efforts.

The miners of the Shenango Valley of Pennsylvania, across the state line, no sooner learned of the accident than they also stopped work in a body and rushed to the scene of the ill-fated mine. Meanwhile bore holes were started in the hope of striking into a room in the high workings, for the purpose of lowering food for the starving men. The mine had not been accurately surveyed, and the first hole went down in solid coal; but the second struck into a room, and provisions were lowered through it. Only two of the men could reach the bore hole. The first installment of food, which consisted of warm broth and whiskey, was eagerly devoured. One of the imprisoned men cried up through the

drill hole to "send down more whiskey." This message from the tomb produced a roar of laughter, as it was well known that he who sent it was partial to the flowing bowl.

At the end of five days the water had been so far lowered as to admit of a rescuing party, which waded along the entry up to their necks in water. Two of the prisoners were rescued, but the other two could not yet be reached. Two more days of heroic effort and they were also recovered and turned over to their friends. The imprisoned men had never lost heart; they heard the sound of the pumps and the noises made by the water bailers, and were buoyed up with the hope that they would be reached and rescued before death by starvation overtook them.

The heroic conduct of the miners of the two valleys, who worked day and night for seven days without leaving the mine, elicited the admiration of all who witnessed their unflinching devotion and unparalleled energy.

This accident created a profound sensation in the Mahoning Valley, and led to considerable discussion among the miners in regard to the necessity of a state law for the proper security of their lives and safety, but the matter was soon forgotten. Four years afterward, however, on the occurrence of the Avondale catastrophe, the miners of Ohio were the first to assert themselves in the soft coal regions of the United States, for the passage of a state law to provide for the regulation, ventilation and inspection of mines.

At this time the miners of the Valley had an official organ devoted to their interests, which was published in Hubbard, Trumbull county, called the *Miners' Journal*. The more intelligent miners of the valley began a discussion through the columns of the *Journal* on the necessity of state inspection for the proper security of the health and safety of miners.

The editor of the *Miners' Journal*, Alonzo D. Fassett, was a young man twenty years of age. The publication of a paper in the interest of the miners was the outcome of a

strange freak which moved him while passing through the village of Hubbard in the year 1868. He had not a dollar in the world and did not know a soul in the town. The press of the valley were a unit in abusing the miners who were then engaged in a strike. Fassett canvassed for advertisements, contracted with a publishing house in Youngstown, and started a five column paper. Held in check by no fear of a libel suit, he abused the operators in every issue worse than the press of the valley abused the miners. Fassett afterward made headway in life, being elected State Senator in 1879, and four years later was appointed State Commissioner of Labor by Gov. Foraker.



A. D. FASSETT.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE OHIO MINERS' BILL.

**I**MMEDIATELY after the occurrence of the Avondale catastrophe the miners of the Mahoning Valley of Ohio became greatly exercised over the necessity of state legislation to secure greater safety in the pursuit of their calling. During the year 1870 a series of letters appeared in the papers of the valley, written by one of the miners under the non de plume of "Jock Pittsbreaks," urging the General Assembly to enact a law for the better preservation of life in the coal mines of the state. The miners of the valley were well organized, and at their district convention, held in Youngstown in the fall a committee was appointed, consisting of Andrew Roy, William Thomson and David Owens, to prepare a bill providing for the proper ventilation and inspection of mines. Another committee was later appointed, consisting of Andrew Roy and John B. Lewis, the district president, to visit the state capital at Columbus, have the bill introduced, and lobby for its passage.

The features of the bill required that two separate openings should be provided to all mines that worked more than ten men; that 100 cubic feet of air per minute per person employed underground, should be circulated to the face of the workings; that mines generating fire-damp should be examined every morning by a fire-viewer before any of the miners were allowed to enter; that miners should have the right to appoint check-weighmen at their own expense to see that their coal was fairly weighed; and the governor was required and directed to appoint four mine inspectors, who should be practical miners of at least ten years' experience,

whose duty it would be to see that the law was enforced and obeyed.

The bill was introduced by Senator Daugherty of Fairfield county, but it was no sooner printed than the mining operators organized to defeat its passage. They sent a committee of thirteen operators, representing every mining district in the state, to oppose the bill. The committee was reinforced by the addition of a corporation lawyer and the



STATE HOUSE, COLUMBUS, O., WHERE THE FIRST BILL WAS  
INTRODUCED FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINERS.

state geologist. This formidable array of legal learning, scientific attainments and corporate wealth appeared before a special committee of the senate, which had charge of the bill, and proceeded to show cause why it should not be enacted into a law. Their contention was that the miners of the state did not desire the passage of the measure, that it was originated by professional demagogues and labor agitators among the miners who "sponged" a good living off the ignorance and cupidity of their fellows; that there was no bad air in Ohio mines; that they were not deep enough to be dangerous; that whenever attention was called to anything that needed to be remedied in or about the mines the owners attended to the matter at once, and they pledged

themselves to look after the interests of their employes in the future as they had done in the past. The passage of such a law, they declared, would result in closing every coal mine in the state.

The attorney contended that the bill was unconstitutional; that it was special legislation, forbidden by the constitution of Ohio; and that if the General Assembly enacted it into a law the supreme court would set it aside as an invasion of proprietary rights.

The state geologist stated that he had recently been in England. and had looked into the manner of coal mining there; that many of the shafts were two thousand feet deep or more; that the mine operators were not required to sink two separate openings; that the shafts were divided into two separate compartments by a wooden partition for the purpose of receiving and discharging the current of air required for ventilation.

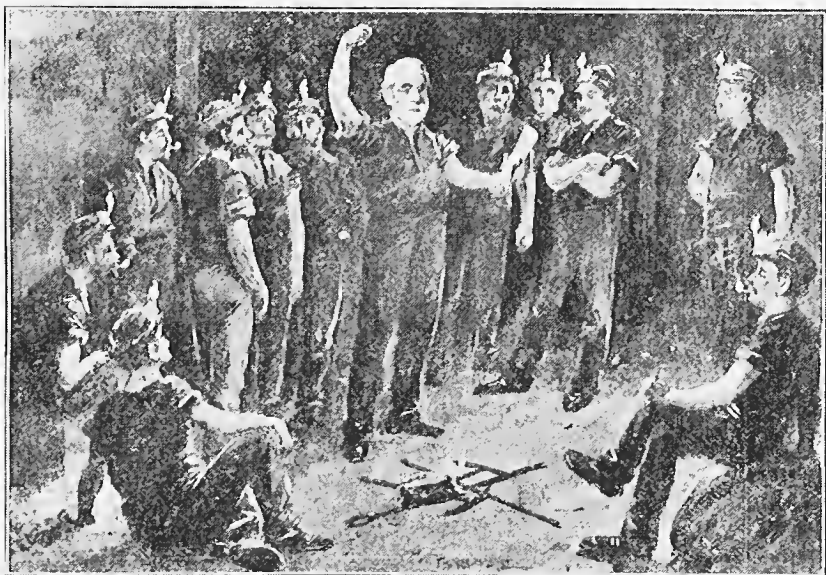
Andrew Roy answered the operators' committee, by a lengthy argument as follows:

"Underground mining, whether of coal or other minerals has ever been regarded as labor fraught with peril. People unaccustomed to its scenes from boyhood do not care to venture far into the bowels of the earth — even those who own and operate coal mines in the State of Ohio, as is clearly in evidence by the ignorance this committee of operators display in describing the sanitary condition of their own mines. Since I came to Columbus, I have heard members of the General Assembly complain that this state house is not properly ventilated, and that they suffer from languor and headache in consequence. There is often complaint made against the sanitary condition of public buildings and private residences. If this be true of buildings above ground with numerous doors and windows provided to receive the fresh air direct from Heaven what must be the condition of the mines, where God's sunlight can never come, and where there



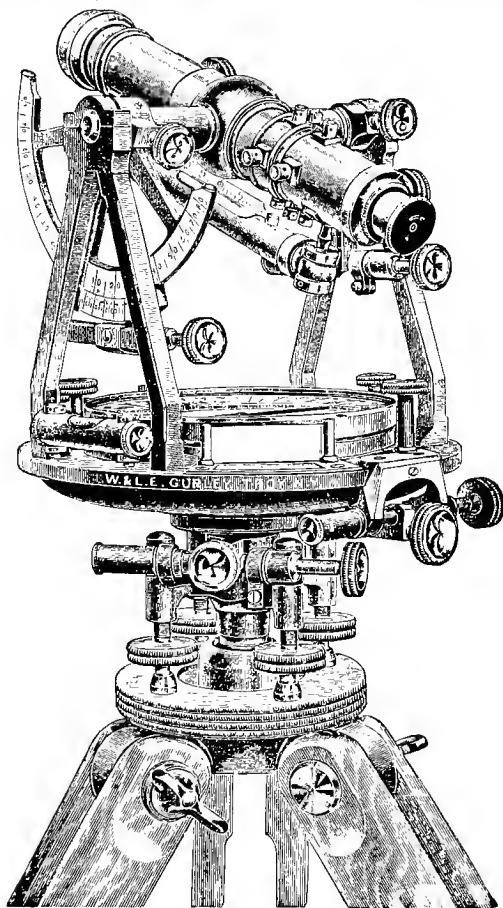
are no windows at all, and the only door is the mouth of the shaft, a mile or more from the working places of the miners.

"On the surface of the earth viciated air flies upward into space. Were it not so man would perish for want of a respirable atmosphere. In mines the air has to travel from one working place to another loaded with impurities from powder smoke, the excrementitious deposits of men and animals, the exhalations from their bodies, lungs and lamps, the decaying woodwork of the mine, and the gases liberated from the coal and its associated strata.



AN UNDERGROUND DISCUSSION OF THE OHIO MINING BILL.

“Coal mining is a business subject to special and ever varying danger. The lives and safety of miners are far removed from public vigilance and investigation. The



MINING TRANSIT.

engineer, machinery, ropes, and ladders by which the miner descends to his work, and returns from it, the passage ways

in the mine, the props for the support of the roof, the ventilating current of air, are provided by the mine owner or his agent, the miner having no voice in the matter. .

"No coal mine ought to be operated unless the workings are periodically surveyed by a competent practical mining engineer; especially is this true where the subterranean excavations are approaching abandoned mines, filled with water or mephitic gases. Of all the workngmen engaged in the diversified employments in the United States the miners are the most discontented, because they are daily plunged in an atmosphere laden with noxious and poisonous gases, which have no parallel on earth. You may preach the doctrine of patience, and the science of political philosophy to such men, telling them that the interests of capital and labor are identical; but so long as their bones ache and their heads are like to burst from breathing the foul atmosphere of a badly ventilated mine they will not believe you.

"One of the operators has stated that so careful is the company which he represents about the safety of the miners that they will not permit one of them to go down the pit in the morning, until a person appointed for the purpose goes through the mine with a naked light to see that there is no fire-damp present. Does he not know that if fire-damp were present it would ignite from the naked light and blow the explorer to pieces? You could not hire a competent practical miner to examine a mine with a naked light which gives off fire-damp.

"The state geologist has informed you that in England the mine owners are not required to make two separate openings. I greatly fear that he was more intent—and properly so—in studying the geology of the country than the sanitary condition of the coal mines. There is not a mine in Great Britain, deep or shallow, permitted by law to work with one opening. In the year 1862 the walking beam of the pumping engine of the Hartley colliery broke in two, and

one-half of it fell down the shaft, knocking out the wooden partition that the learned geologist described, which with other debris filled the shaft for 60 feet from the bottom, and before it could be removed every soul in the mine, 205 in number, died for want of fresh air.

“At the next meeting of Parliament a bill was introduced providing for two separate openings to all mines so that the miners could be withdrawn from one shaft in case of accident to the other. The coal companies came swarming up to the Parliament House to protest against the passage of the bill, on the ground that if it were enacted into law it would close every coal mine in the United Kingdom. But Parliament paid no attention to their protestations, and no mine has been shut down on account of the law, which was promptly enacted.

“There are several gases generated in coal mines, which with the permission of the committee, I will describe. These gases are called fire-damp, black-damp, and white-damp by the miners. Fire-damp is an explosive gas, and is one of the most dangerous elements ever encountered in human enterprise. When fourteen times the amount of common air is mixed with it no explosion can occur, its greatest explosive strength being when nine or ten times the amount of air is combined with the gas. In this condition when it is brought in contact with a naked light it explodes with the rapidity and violence of powder. Mines that generate fire-damp require to be well ventilated, otherwise explosion results, destroying life and property. When an explosion occurs the dead miners are generally blamed for causing it. As a matter of fact no explosion is ever caused by the fault of the miners; for if enough of fresh air is mixed with the gas to dilute it, it becomes harmless. The miners suffer death, and the operators relate the history of the catastrophe.

“So far there have been few explosions in Ohio mines, and none of great destructive force. This condition is due to the

fact that our mines are either level-free or comparatively shallow shafts. Inflammable air, so far, is seldom met in alarming volume in drift mines and shallow shafts, in this state, but such mines give off black-damp and white-damp from causes which have already been stated, and unless the workings are properly ventilated the mine atmosphere soon becomes thick and vapid by diffusion with black-damp. The air is always purest in the morning, because the circulation is renewed during the absence of the miners; but in the afternoon, or towards quitting time it becomes so foul that the miners' lamps will no longer burn, and the miners themselves suffer with severe headaches. A miner can remain for some time in his room before he becomes insensible after his light goes out. In white-damp, however, he will fall insensible, and if not speedily removed, will die, while his lamp will continue burning. White-damp is largely formed from the powder used in the mine for blasting out the coal, and from the waste or wrought-out parts of the mine, particularly where breeding fires are liable to break out in the gob.

"All mining authorities are agreed that one hundred cubic feet of air per minute per miner employed is necessary to be circulated through the workings of the most harmless of mines to render them fit for the abode of miners; and in mines which make fire-damp double or quadruple this quantity may be required, according to the amount of inflammable air which the mines may generate. I will venture the statement that there are not a dozen mines in the state in which a hundred feet of air per minute per person employed is provided, and that in the great majority of the mines the arrangements for carrying forward the air to the working faces are so defective that more than half of the current never reaches the miners. The air courses provided for carrying forward the air are not made air tight; they resemble a leaky bucket—full when it leaves the spring, but half gone before the house is reached.

"We want mine inspectors to see that good and sufficient ventilation is provided, and an escapement shaft sunk for the withdrawal of the men in case of accident to the main opening. Every mining country in Europe makes such provision by law. Are the miners of Ohio not entitled to equal protection; we think so, and are asking for nothing but what is right. We ask for a mouthful of fresh air amidst the mephitic blasts of death which surround us; and for a hole to crawl out when the hoisting shaft is closed up, as was the case at the Avondale shaft a year ago, the whole population of the mine being killed when the shaft took fire.

"The operators have told you that the passage of the miners' bill will result in driving them out of business. I do not share that fear; on the contrary, the ultimate result will be the lessening of the cost of producing coal. Better ventilation will make better and more reliable workmen. The miner will, moreover, feel happier when descending the shaft in the morning to think that in case of accident to the hoisting shaft he possesses means of exit from the escapement shaft, which the miners' bill provides.

"Let me say to the operators that you are laboring under a great mistake in charging that this bill is the work of demagogues and mischief-makers, who live by fomenting strikes. In the past few years several bills have been introduced in the General Assembly, making it a conspiracy to organize a strike. No bill of this character will ever become a law in the State of Ohio. The way to prevent miners' strikes is to supply miners with an abundance of fresh air, and the other conditions provided in the miners' bill."

After the adjournment of the meeting the senate committee held an informal meeting, and discussed the claims of the operators' opposition to the passage of the bill. Six of the seven senators voted to support the measure as an act of justice to the men who delve in the mines.



MINER RETURNING HOME.

When the committee of mining operators appeared in Columbus to oppose the passage of the miners' bill, the official organ of the Mahoning Valley miners issued a call for a mass convention to meet in Youngstown to show the General Assembly and the people of Ohio, that the mining operators were misrepresenting their employes. In obedience to this call, every miner in the Valley laid down his tools and marched into Youngstown, dressed in holiday attire and carrying United States flags and banners bearing appropriate mottoes. As the three thousand four hundred sturdy sons of subterranean toil reached the outskirts of the city, a number of the leaders who had been soldiers in the war of the rebellion, formed the parade into columns of platoons and marched them through the town to the music of several bands playing "Marching Through Georgia," and other patriotic airs. The manly bearing and firm tread of the miners elicited warm expressions of admiration from the citizens of the town and from the mine owners themselves.

The convention organized in the Opera House, and appointed a committee to draw up an address to the General Assembly expressive of the sentiments of the meeting. During the absence of the committee friends of the miners addressed the convention on the perils of the mine. The address of the committee to the Legislature, which was unanimously adopted, recounted in manly and dignified language the necessity of state supervision of mines.

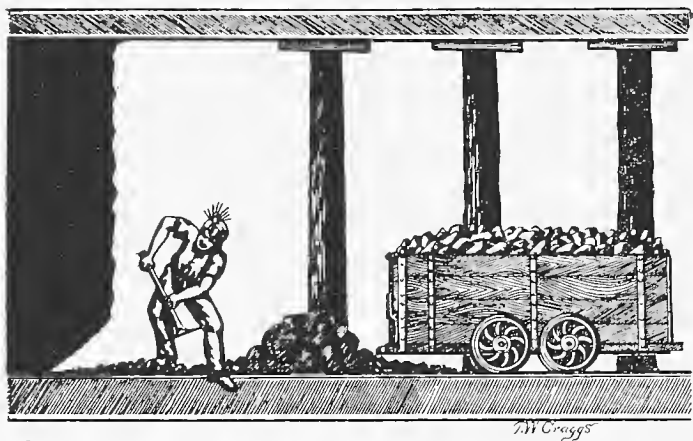
The miners of the state became thoroughly aroused by the opposition of their employers, and poured in petitions to the Legislature praying for the passage of the bill. Mrs. John Kidd of Steubenville, a lady of intelligence and public spirit, the wife of a miner, drew up a petition and presented it to the president of the coal company for his signature, then circulated it among the miners and sent it to Columbus to be laid before the General Assembly, asking for the passage of the miners' bill.



The miners' committee, foreseeing that the bill could not pass at this session, proposed to the Senate committee that the Legislature enact a law providing for the appointment of a commission to examine and report to the Governor for the use of the General Assembly, the sanitary condition of the mines of the state. This would settle the question as to whether miners or mining operators were stating facts. The operators opposed this proposition as bitterly as the original bill, stating that it would only put the State to unnecessary expense. The miners' committee answered that if the State did not care to pay the commissioners the miners would foot the bill.

In accordance with the suggestion of the miners' committee, a joint resolution was introduced by Senator Woodworth of Mahoning county, providing for the appointment of a commission, by the Governor, to consist of three competent men, at least one of whom should be a practical miner, to examine the leading coal mines of the state, and report their condition to the Governor for the use of the Legislature, together with such recommendations as to legislation for the proper security of life, health and limb in the coal mines of the state as the commission should deem necessary. Governor Hayes appointed Charles Reemelin of Cincinnati, Benjamin Skinner of Pomeroy, and Andrew Roy of Church Hill, on the commission. The committee was on duty five months, and made two reports. The majority report favored the creation of sanitary boards in every county in the state, to consist of the sheriff, the county surveyor, and two resident physicians in practice whose duty it should be upon reasonable complaint that bad air or danger to life and limb existed in mines, or other establishments, to visit such places and investigate the matters complained of, and in case of imminent danger, to abate the cause by such safeguards as the commissioners should deem necessary.

The minority report opposed the creation of such commission on the ground that it would do harm instead of good; that it was an attempt to make the blind lead the blind; that it was the worse system of legislative interference which could be conceived, and would be acceptable neither to the miners nor the operators. The report recommended the miners' bill of the preceding winter, as it had many pressing claims on the people of Ohio, and embodied the experience of the best practical miners of the State.



MINER AT WORK IN THICK VEIN COAL.

## CHAPTER XI.

### ENACTMENT OF THE OHIO BILL FOR THE INSPECTION OF MINES.

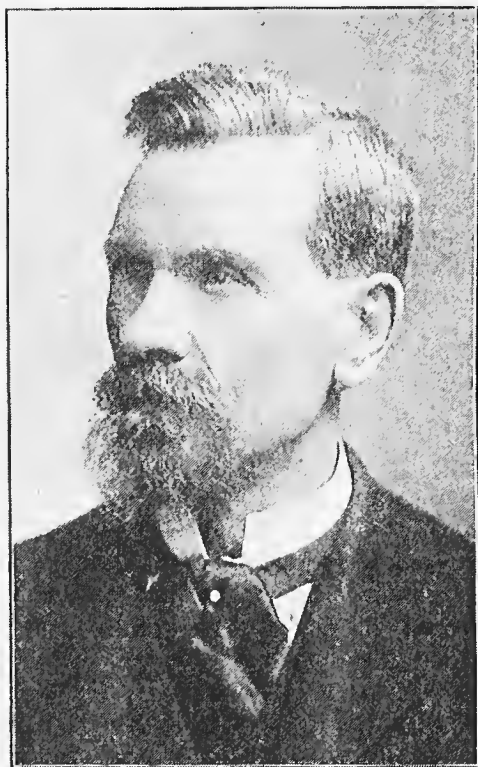
THE presence of the mining commission in the various coal regions of Ohio during the summer and fall of 1872, encouraged the miners to continue the agitation of the miners' bill. At this time there was no State organization in Ohio; but the leading mining districts were well organized, and acted together when occasion required. The Mahoning Valley, the Tuscarawas Valley and the Hocking Valley were the three leading districts in the State.

During the summer and fall the leaders were in constant communication with each other, touching the necessity of securing the passage of the Miners' bill at the incoming session of the General Assembly. Assessments were levied for the purpose of maintaining delegates at the state capital. *The Miners' Journal* entered into the discussion of the question with uncommon ardor.

When the Legislature met in January, 1873, the miners of the Mahoning Valley sent Andrew Roy to Columbus to explain to the General Assembly the necessity of the passage of the miners' bill. The miners of the Tuscarawas Valley sent John Pollock, and the miners of Nelsonville sent H. C. Comstock. The other districts, whether organized or not, sent their quota of money to pay the delegates.

John Pollock, who represented the Tuscarawas Valley miners, was born in the north of Ireland in 1839, but moved to Scotland with his parents in 1848, and began work in the mines the same year. In 1863 the family emigrated to the United States and located in Stark county, Ohio. Pollock, who had taken an active part in miners' affairs in Scotland,

was elected financial secretary of the American Miners' Association soon after resuming work in the mines of Stark county. When the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association was organized in Ohio he was elected general organ-



JOHN POLLOCK.

izer for the state, a position he occupied for three years. In 1873 he was a delegate to the Industrial Congress held in Cleveland, as the representative of the miners of Ohio.

John Pollock was one of the signers of the address to the miners of the United States for a national convention to meet in Youngstown, Ohio, on the second Tuesday of October, 1873, to form a miners' national union. Two years later he represented the miners of the Tuscarawas Valley on the board of arbitration — the first ever held in Ohio — to settle a wages dispute between miners and operators.

For a number of years he was district president of the Tuscarawas Valley miners, and so skillfully did he manage the organization that wages were higher in that district than anywhere in the State. He was well educated, an able, earnest man, and a good fighter. He is still living at North Lawrence, Ohio, which has been his home for over forty years, and is at present employed by the State bureau of labor statistics. The breath of suspicion has never been raised against his honor in all the years he served the miners of Ohio.

Soon after the General Assembly convened Senator Jones of Trumbull county reintroduced the miners' bill and it passed by an unanimous vote. The operators became greatly alarmed and sent in telegrams to members of the House not to press the bill to a vote until a committee of mine owners could be heard in opposition to its passage. There were several mining operators in the House, one of them being chairman of the committee of mines and mining. A day was set for the operators' committee to appear and they were promptly on hand. They used the same argument that was used the preceding year — that the mines were not deep enough to be dangerous, that the agitation among the miners for legislation was inspired by demagogues and mischief-makers, who instead of being friends of the miners as they professed, were in reality their worst enemies.

Pollock made a lengthy argument in reply, covering the whole ground from the standpoint of the miners, and warned the legislative committee that unless provision was made by

law and properly qualified officers appointed to see that the law was enforced and obeyed there would be another Avondale catastrophe in Ohio mines to startle the State and throw hundreds of families into mourning.

The bill passed the House, but all its provisions for the inspection of mines were stricken out, and a section added imposing a fine of five hundred dollars on any operator who refused or neglected to comply with its provisions. The Senate concurred in its passage as amended on the ground that half a loaf was better than no bread. The operators were jubilant; the miners were correspondingly depressed.

Not a single operator in the State paid the least attention to the requirements of the law. It acted like a train of cars on a dead level without any propelling force. Those who emasculated the bill knew what they were doing. The miners of Ohio were, however, far from giving up the fight. They picked their flints and prepared for a renewal of the conflict, as soon as the Legislature should convene again.

On the following June, an accident occurred at a mine in Portage county, the home of Mr. Conrad, the member of the Legislature, who emasculated the mining bill. The mine had but one opening and the timbers in the slope caught fire from the ventilating furnace, while twenty-one men were at work inside. Eleven of them escaped through the smoke and fire, although all were more or less burned or suffocated; but the other ten perished miserably.

At this time the convention to form a new state constitution was in session in Columbus, and the miners appealed to that body to amend the constitution so as to compel the General Assembly to enact all needed laws for the proper security and safety of the subterranean workers of the State. Accordingly, Mr. Jackson, the member from Perry county, offered an amendment for this purpose; the miners sent in petitions praying for its adoption, and many of the delegates favored the proposition. It found an able and earnest cham-

pion in Hon. Martin A. Foran, the delegate from Cleveland, himself a workingman, a cooper by trade. Mr. Foran made the halls of the convention ring with his impassioned and manly eloquence in favor of the adoption of the proposition.



MARTIN A. FORAN.

No abler speeches were made in the convention. The following is an extract from one of his speeches on the subject:

“In a great civilized, enlightened and progressive republic, that has existed for nearly a century, one would naturally suppose that every citizen enjoyed all the protection it were possible for government to bestow. And certainly it seems

strange that Ohio, after passing through over seventy years of existence as a State, should not have upon her statute books ample laws for the protection of the thirteen thousand miners who contribute so much to the wealth and prosperity of the commonwealth. And it seems stranger still, in fact it is passing strange, that a democratic republican state should be behind many of the monarchical countries of Europe in this respect. In England and Prussia miners are afforded more protection from water, choke-damp and fire-damp, and are afforded better facilities for escaping in case of accidents, than in any state of the American Union. This statement is not very creditable to our republican institutions, but it is a truth and as citizens we should blush for it.

"No one but an actual miner can appreciate the rigors of their lives, or the fearful horrors to which they are every day exposed. The Avondale holocaust startled the nation and thrilled it with horror. The shutting up of these one hundred and nine victims by a very wall of fire, should convince every man of the indispensable necessity of constructing escapement shafts to every mine in the country. The scenes that transpired at Atwater in our own state a few years ago are yet fresh in the memory of our people. The Drummond disaster and the Shamokin horror are still ringing their doleful wails in our ears. If we could witness the sickening, heartrending scenes that transpired around these mines after these disasters; if we could see by the dim flicker of the miner's lamp, the grief-stricken, broken-hearted miner's wife searching among the dead and dying, or among the charred and blackened corpses, for that husband who will never smile on her again; if we could see the great pitying crowd, surge back and forth, and see little children crying over dead fathers, while the groans of the dying and the lamentation of orphans and widows fill the air; if we could see and hear all this, I do not think we would hesitate to afford the miners of the State all the protection they demand.



Capital is always protected, its every wish is promptly obeyed by our law-makers. Do you not think citizens of more importance than property? Is it not time that we did something to save the lives, the health and limbs of those who go down in mines—damp, dismal, dripping mines—the land of darkness and the shadow of death, to use the beautiful words of scripture.”

Gen. Thomas Ewing, one of the ablest men in the convention, championed the cause of the miners, and spoke with manly eloquence in favor of the constitutional amendment.

Judge Hoadly, afterwards governor of Ohio, opposed the proposition. In his speech against its adoption he said:

“Although there was a petition put in this morning, it is not likely to be granted. We have tried to make men sober and moral by law, and now we are going to try to surround them with protection against carelessness and danger, and enable them to shut their eyes and walk in darkness, satisfied with the care and protection of the State. I admit that there is a line to which the right of the Legislature—the duty of the Legislature—may go without infringing on the natural right of the citizen; but what I want to suggest as the safe side, is to leave the people free, and to allow mishap and disaster to have its natural effect as the penalty for and cure of the evils that result from negligence which causes mishap and disaster.”

When the final vote was taken on the adoption of the proposition, only six were recorded against it; and at the ensuing session of the General Assembly in January, 1874, all the sections of the mining law which had been emasculated at the instance of the mining operators two years before were restored, except that but one inspector was provided. The obstinate perseverance of the miners prevailed.

The operators did not, however, give up the fight. They made a united and determined effort to control the appointment of the mine inspector, but were again defeated.

When the bill for the regulation and inspection of the anthracite mines was pending in the Legislature of Pennsylvania, the bituminious miners of that State made no effort to have its provisions extended to them. Even when the Ohio miners were deep in the fight to secure a law for their protection, the soft coal miners of Pennsylvania took little interest in legislation for the regulation and ventilation of the mines.

Ohio was the first state in the bituminious fields to secure protection by state authority. The miners fought long and hard until success crowned their efforts. The hard coal miners had no difficulty in procuring the passage of the bill to cover the anthracite fields. The Avondale horror had paved the way for the enactment of the law.

The operation and results of the Ohio mining law were watched with keen interest by the operators and miners of other States. After the law had been in successful operation three years the soft coal miners of Pennsylvania began to organize to secure a similar law, and were successful. Maryland followed, and one after another of the mining states asserted themselves, until all enacted mining laws for the preservation of the lives and safety of their subterranean people.

All opposition to the enactment of legislation for the preservation of human life in coal mines has long disappeared. The fears expressed by the mining operators that the inspectors would be simply and only agents of the miners' union; and the check-weighmen make endless trouble, proved to be groundless. An example of this change of feeling was presented when the miners of Michigan in 1904 organized to secure the passage of a mining law for the preservation of their lives and safety. The mining operators instead of organizing to prevent the passage of such a measure, appointed a committee to assist the miners' committee to prepare the bill.

Nearly all the mining laws in the several mining states of the Union need revision by commissions composed of operators and miners appointed for the purpose. Every provision in the law should be necessary, and all irrelevant matter stricken out. To burden the act with superfluous matter simply weakens it, and furnishes an excuse for the non-enforcement of its necessary provisions.

A strike occurred in the Mahoning Valley in the winter of 1872-3. The Church Hill coal company as a means of breaking it up conceived the idea of throwing the strikers out of the company houses. The constable charged with this duty swore in several of the neighboring farmers to assist him. The miners' wives threw pepper on their stoves and otherwise made it unpleasant for the constable and his assistants. One of the leading miners requested the assistants to desist from their unpleasant labors; they answered that they would gladly do so, but the constable had threatened them with the vengeance of the law in case they declined to assist him. A striker was despatched to Youngstown on horseback with the following note to a leading lawyer:

"David Wilson, Esq., Attorney at Law. Is a citizen obliged to assist the constable in throwing striking miners out of company houses?"

In an incredibly short time the horseman returned, bringing the following answer:

"No citizen is required to assist the constable except to keep the peace."

The farmers refused to work longer and left for home.

The constable left to report the situation to the coal company. Meantime the miners whose furniture had been thrown into the street, thinking that the proceedings had been illegal, carried their goods back into the houses from which they had been evicted. Next day the sheriff appeared on the scene with a posse of deputies and turned them out again, in the midst of a heavy snow storm. By the

advice of the lawyer the miners moved back during the night, but exchanged houses.

Meantime one of the miners wrote an account of the eviction to the *Cleveland Daily Leader*, stating that a number of the strikers' wives were far advanced in that condition which women wish to be who love their lords, and that they had to bide the pelting of the pitiless storm all night or seek shelter in the vacated houses. A storm of indignation was raised around the ears of the officials of the coal company for resorting to such heartless cruelty to break the strike.

The coal company then sent out agents to gather up a lot of strike-breakers, and soon several hundred Italians, recent immigrants, were brought to the mines, which broke the back of the strike. The new and old miners worked in peace for some weeks, when one of the strike-breakers stabbed a miner who had kicked a bucket of water out of the strike-breaker's hand. The old miners drove the Italians into a house they occupied, and set it on fire. The Italians jumped out of the windows and one of them was struck over the head with the barrel of a shot-gun from the effects of which he died during the night.

Thirty of the rioters were arrested, twenty-eight of whom were sentenced to a hundred days' imprisonment in the county jail. The other two were sent to the penitentiary, one for a year, the other for five years.

The Mahoning Valley coal field of Ohio was at this time the first in point of production in the state. The coal laid in swamps or basins of limited area. It has been for a number of years all worked out. At this time the mines were badly ventilated, but their sanitary condition became improved soon after the enactment of the mining law. The region produced a number of local leaders of good ability.

One of the men who participated in the strike, H. W. Smith, then a young man, became prominent in the miners' movement in later years. He was born in Wales, in 1854,

and went to work in the mines of his native country, as a trapper boy, when he was nine years of age. His parents emigrated to the United States in 1866, settling in Summit county, Ohio, where young Smith resumed work in the mines. Later his parents moved to the Mahoning Valley, and Smith worked at Mineral Ridge for some years.



H. W. SMITH.

In 1874 he joined the Knights of Labor, and being a bright, intelligent young man in the first blush of full-grown manhood, he was employed as an organizer for the noble and holy order, his field of action embracing the states of Ohio, West Virginia, and Indiana. In 1877 he with two associates

established a workingman's paper at Bloomington, Illinois, known as the *Western Advance*. While connected with the paper he kept up the work of organizing locals for the Knights of Labor, having formed thirty assemblies in Illinois the same year, most of them being miners' assemblies.

In 1886 Smith was elected vice-president of the Illinois Protective Union, Dan McLaughlin, president, and P. H. Donnelly, secretary. From 1893 to 1895 he was an organizer for the Protective Association of the Miners of Illinois. When the National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers was organized he was elected vice-president and held this position two terms, and was then appointed organizer for the States of Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and West Virginia. In later years he was connected with the state bureau of labor as an assistant to Hon. David Ross, the talented chief of the department.

Smith was self-taught, having been taken to the mines at too tender an age to receive any education. Indeed, nearly all the prominent miners connected with the labor movement had to rely on themselves to secure an education. Self-taught men rise superior to early environment if they possess the ability and the will to make headway in life.



ELECTRIC COAL CUTTING MACHINE.

## CHAPTER XII.

MINING LEGISLATION IN ILLINOIS AND PENNSYLVANIA.  
APPLICATION OF COAL CUTTING MACHINERY.

IN 1872 the miners of Illinois, Indiana and Missouri formed a union which was known as the Miners' Benevolent and Protective Association, to look after the interests of the miners in these three states; but the organization worked in harmony with the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association of other mining states, and cards were exchanged between members of these unions. Its purpose was to see that miners and mine laborers received a fair day's wages for a fair day's work; to reduce the hours of labor; and to secure legislation providing for the health and safety of the underground population. John Morgan was elected president, Walton Rutledge, secretary, and Patrick McCann, treasurer.

Illinois had secured an amendment to the new constitution of the state requiring the Legislature to provide all needed safeguards for the protection of the health and safety of miners. John Hinchcliffe of St. Clair county, the former editor of the official organ of the American Miners' Association, had, through the influence of the miners of the Bellville Tract, been elected state senator. At his instance a bill was prepared and introduced in the Senate, similar to the bill of the Ohio miners, for the regulation, ventilation and inspection of mines, but the opposition was so pronounced against the creation of new offices by members from the rural counties, that the bill was withdrawn, and another prepared by a committee of miners, of which Walton Rutledge was chairman, making the county surveyor ex-officio inspector of mines, was introduced by Mr. Hinchcliffe, which passed both Houses,

without much opposition and was promptly signed by the governor.

The county surveyor, who knew practically nothing about subterranean operations, generally appointed miners to do the work of inspection. The law did not give satisfaction, and in 1874 it was amended so that the board of supervisors appointed the inspectors. There was continued complaint against the operation and results of the law, not only by miners, but by the inspectors themselves. Provision for the payment of the inspectors was left in the hands of the county surveyors, who fixed the number of inspections to be made each year, and limited them to a single visit.

At every session of the Legislature since the passage of the law in 1872, the miners made strenuous efforts to secure State inspectors; but it was not until after the dreadful catastrophe of the Diamond mine, near Braidwood in the year 1883, by which nearly the whole population of the mine was drowned by an inundation of water, that this much needed reform in mining legislation was secured. At the following session of the Legislature, the law was amended making provision for the appointment by the governor of five State inspectors; all applicants being required to appear before a board of examiners, pass a satisfactory examination, and receive a certificate of competency before being eligible to the office. In 1899, the law was further amended, adding two additional inspectors, and in the large mining counties, requiring the mining board to appoint county inspectors to assist the State inspectors and work under their jurisdiction. This law is giving general satisfaction, having been framed by practical miners. It covers all needed points, and is not burdened by useless requirements, which can neither be enforced nor obeyed.

The miners of Illinois have been instrumental in securing the passage of many wholesome labor laws, aided by the trades unions of Chicago and other industrial centers. For a number



of years they have had wide-awake representative miners in the Legislature, who have been indefatigable in their efforts to secure the enactment of laws for the amelioration of labor. Politics did not enter into their selection. Whenever a miner received the nomination from either party, the mine workers of the county eschewed politics and rallied to his support.

Walton Rutledge was the leading spirit in the movement for mining legislation in the state of Illinois. He framed the first bill which became a law of the state. It was far from being perfect, but it served as an entering wedge for future legislation. Rutledge was born in England in 1835, and came to the United States in 1854, settling in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. In 1858 he moved to the Bellville Tract of Illinois, where he resumed his occupation as a miner. In 1874 he was elected county surveyor of St. Clair county, and was made ex-officio inspector of mines the same year, holding that office until the year 1884. He was made a State inspector when the new mining law took effect, providing for State inspectors. He is known as the father of the mining laws of Illinois.

Rutledge saw the beginning of the coal mining industry in Illinois, with its small drifts, slopes and shallow shafts, opened on the outcrop of the coal field, and has lived to see shafts a thousand feet in depth equipped in the most modern style with steel towers, fireproof buildings, and ventilating fans, thirty feet in diameter, moving one hundred and fifty thousand feet of air per minute.

Walton Rutledge is one of the most practical and intelligent of mine inspectors, and ranks high as a mining expert in the State of Illinois. He is especially skilled in the art of mine ventilation, the noxious and poisonous gases of coal mines, and the winning and working of coal beds. Along these lines he has few superiors in the United States.

The miners of the soft coal regions of Pennsylvania displayed inexcusable apathy for several years after the anthra-

cite miners and those of Ohio and Illinois had organized and secured the enactment of laws for the preservation of life and safety in their dangerous subterranean workshops. In 1876, however, the bituminous miners threw off their lethargy and following the example of the miners of Ohio, asked for the appointment of a commission by authority of the State to examine and report on the condition of the bituminous mines. A joint resolution was accordingly passed by the Legislature, authorizing and requiring the governor to appoint a commission for this purpose, and directing the commissioners to recommend such legislation as they might deem necessary to secure the health and safety of the underground population.

The commission, which consisted of John Archibald, August Steiner and John O'Neil, made a careful inspection of the leading bituminous mines; but in making up their report, O'Neil, who was a mining operator, opposed inspection by State authority, which Archibald and Steiner recommended. The Legislature, however, paid no attention to the minority report, and enacted a law on the 19th of April, 1877, providing for the regulation, ventilation and inspection of the bituminous mines of the State. The act divided the mines into three inspection districts, and provided for the appointment by the governor, of one mine inspector for each of the three districts.

In 1876, the miners of Maryland, although there was but one shaft in the State, and only thirty-five mines altogether, secured the enactment of a mining law, which provided for one inspector.

Indiana, a few years later, also enacted a mining law for the inspection of her coal mines. The inspector was not a salaried officer, but was authorized to charge five dollars for each mine inspected, the operator being required to pay the bill. This law was later amended requiring the State to pay the inspectors an annual salary. The

States of Colorado, Iowa, Missouri and Kansas followed with mine inspection acts. Every State in which the business of coal mining is carried on to any extent, has now a mining code for the preservation of human life.

As subterranean dangers are much the same in every mining field, the mining codes of all the States were copied largely from the mining laws of Ohio and Pennsylvania. They all provide in a general way for inspection by State authority; for two separate openings to mines to secure ingress and egress in case of accident to one of the shafts; for making and preserving maps and plans of mines; for the amount and manner of distribution of air; and for all other matters affecting the lives, health and safety of the underground population.

In both the anthracite and bituminous fields of Pennsylvania, Illinois and several other mining States, all applicants for the position of mine inspector are required to appear before an examining board, pass a satisfactory examination and receive a certificate of competency. The examining board, which is composed of mining engineers and practical miners, is sworn to be governed by the evidence of qualification, and not by political or personal considerations in making recommendations, or in rejecting applicants. The governor makes the appointments from among the number of applicants who pass the board and receive certificates. In Ohio, and in other States, where the appointments are made by the governor direct, the miners claim that little attention is paid to practical experience or scientific attainments, party politics invariably governing in the selection of the inspectors. The miners generally and justly complain that the mining laws are not enforced, and point to the alarming array of accidents by explosion and otherwise, and to the unwholesome condition of the working places of mines arising from the presence of noxious and poisonous gases.

The mines of the anthracite region of Pennsylvania are more dangerous and fatal to human life than those of any other coal region in the United States. Since the enactment of the mining law in 1870, accidents per person employed and per ton of coal mined have been materially decreased; but each year as the mine inspector reports show, they are still frightful to contemplate. In anthracite mines, each miner has an assistant, usually an inexperienced man.

In the hope of providing greater security to life and limb, the Legislature of Pennsylvania has resorted to an extraordinary expedient of requiring that all persons applying for work as miners in any anthracite mine, must pass an examination and secure a certificate from a mining board, setting forth that they have had at least two years of practical experience as a mine laborer.

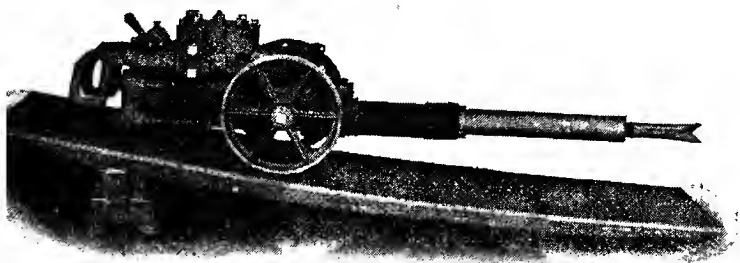
The mining law relating to the bituminous mines of Pennsylvania, providing for the lives, health, safety and welfare of persons employed therein, also requires mine bosses and assistant mine bosses to have certificates of competency. The supreme court of the State, since the enactment of this provision, has decided that it takes all responsibility for accidents from the shoulders of the mining operators. Such an interpretation of the law was not contemplated by the miners, at whose instance it was enacted.

Until the year 1875 coal was mined by the same tools which were used by the rude forefathers of the mine five hundred years ago. Numerous attempts had been made in Great Britain to invent a coal cutting machine to supersede the laborious and exhausting method of hand mining. First and last, nearly a hundred of iron miners had been invented and patented in the mother country, but none of them were found in practice to hold their own against the brawny arm of the Anglo-Saxon miner, and one after another were discarded.

It was reserved for American mechanical genius to invent a coal-cutting machine to successfully compete with the skill

and energy of American hand-mining. In 1875 a coal cutter called the Butler, and later the Harrison, was introduced in the mines of the Diamond Coal and Mining Company, in the State of Illinois, which after a few defects in its make-up were remedied, held its own against the miners' pick. It did no more than hold its own, however, and there were many first-class underground workmen who could undercut more coal in a competitive trial than the iron miner.

In 1860 the Chicago, Wilmington and Virmillion Coal Company, of Illinois, at that time one of the wealthiest corporations in the west, put ten of the Harrison machines in their mines, fitting up a blowing engine of fifty horse power



HARRISON MINING MACHINE.

to operate them with compressed air. By this time the machine had been improved and did speedier and better work than when first introduced, and the question of economy had been practically solved.

This coal-cutting machine was simple in construction, being operated with compressed air by an iron piston, at the end of which a double pointed pick, made of solid steel, was inserted. The air pressure required to run the machine ranged from forty to fifty pounds. One man operated it by two handles—one handle being held in each hand—and delivered about 40 blows per minute. The machine was very portable.

It was mounted on wheels, and could be readily moved from one room to another.

The same year in which the Harrison machine was introduced another coal-cutter named the Lechner was introduced at the mines of the Straitsville Central Mining Company, in the Hocking Valley of Ohio. It consisted of an engine operated by compressed air, the cylinders of which were double, standing upright. The coal of the Central mines was ten feet high, the room thirty feet wide, which afforded ample space to experiment with the new iron miner.

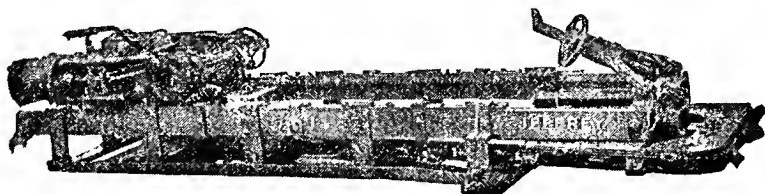
The undermining was made in the bottom of the coal seam by means of a revolving horizontal bar three feet wide, into which a number of sharp steel points were inserted. The under-cuttings were ground into dust, and were removed by means of revolving chain-scrapers as fast as they were cut. Two men were required to operate the machine, one of whom ran the engine, the other removed the cuttings with a shovel. The machine cut a groove in the coal three feet wide, six feet deep and four inches high. As soon as a cut was finished the machine was withdrawn and shifted over three feet, and another cut was made as before, this operation being repeated until the whole width of the room was undermined. It was then loaded on a truck and hauled to an adjoining room.

For a year or longer the machine did not work satisfactorily. The chains would break, the knives would break, the cuttings would not discharge themselves, and stop the machine, and otherwise time was lost. The miners, who at first did not take kindly toward the machine, now looked upon it with contempt, and predicted its speedy removal from the mine as an absolute failure. For a year it was oftener at the machine shop undergoing repairs or alterations than it was at work in the mine .

The inventor, however, was far from giving up. He watched the operation and results of the iron miner with an intelligent eye, strengthened its weak points, remedied its

defects, and before it had been in operation two years had so perfected it that the Anglo-Saxon miner was no match for it in an undercutting contest. The Harrison coal-cutter too, notwithstanding its rapid and terrible blows was compelled to yield the palm to its formidable competitor.

In 1877 the Jeffrey Manufacturing Company of Columbus, Ohio, was organized, and obtained control of the machine, and from time to time further improved it. Other mining operators in the Hocking Valley became alarmed at the success of the "Jeffrey," and made haste to purchase and apply it. Soon operators in other states, notably Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, Alabama, Illinois and Colorado introduced it. In 1880 the cylinders were changed from an upright to a horizontal position, and two drive chains were used. In 1883 a rack and pinion feed was applied, which brought the machine to a high state of perfection.



A few years before the application of coal-cutting machinery in mines small locomotives were applied to underground hauling, but never became popular, owing to the smoke and gases formed by the combustion of the coal required to generate steam.

After the application of electricity to street railway haulage this method of hauling coal underground was adopted by some of the large mining companies, and worked so satisfactorily that larger power plants were erected to operate coal-cutting machines and mine locomotives from the same power house. In the erection of new mining plants compressed air is now substituted by electricity.

In 1893 electric chain coal-cutters were applied to coal-cutting machines which was a marked improvement over the bar-cutter. The best coal-cutting machines now in use undermine a depth of five to seven feet and a width of three feet three inches to three feet eight inches, the height of the machine being two and a half feet. Smaller machines are built which can be operated in seams less than three feet in thickness. A small machine built of steel for use in mines worked on the long wall system has been devised in recent years. Machines for shearing have been patented that cut a groove three feet in height, the attack being made on the upper portion of the seam and working downward until the whole of the side is cut from top to bottom.

There are a number of manufacturers of both punching and scraping machines in the United States. Many of them have been successful in introducing their coal-cutters into English mines, as well as in mines on the continent of Europe. This is essentially an age of labor-saving machinery. The iron miner has come to stay. The application of labor-saving machinery has not only benefitted the employer of labor by reducing the cost of production, but has benefitted the laborer, taking much of the severe and exhausting toil off his hands. The American miner will see to it that he gets his share of the rewards of American mechanical genius.

The extension of coal-cutting machinery during the past ten years has been marvelous, and before the close of the first quarter of the twentieth century, mining by the pick will have become a lost art. The first ten years after the introduction of the Harrison machine in Illinois and the Lechner machine in Ohio the iron miner made slow progress, but it was progress all the time — never retrogression. In 1890, sixteen years after the first machines were introduced, the output of coal mined by machinery did not exceed five million tons. In 1891 machine-mined coal had reached 6,211,732 tons, equal to 6.66 per cent. of the total production for the



year. Five years later, 1896, the output of machine-mined coal had reached 16,424,932 tons, equivalent to 14.17 per cent. of the total output. In 1900 the output had risen to 52,790,523 tons or 25 per cent. of the production of the year. In the year 1902, the year this history closes, the production of machine-mined coal was 69,611,582, equal to 26.09 per cent. of the total output.

The application of coal-cutting machinery was followed by the general introduction of fans as a ventilating power. Prior to their introduction the ventilating current was produced by furnace power, or in small mines was left to the natural forces. To create and maintain a good current of air in mines a blazing fire had to be kept burning day and night in the furnace, otherwise the current diminished in volume in proportion to the decrease of the fire. The furnaceman, whose duty it was to keep a good fire, frequently neglected his duty. The fan which is kept in motion by mechanical force, maintains a steadier and a stronger current of air. For shallow shafts the fan is greatly superior to the furnace, even in the best regulated shallow mines, for the practical power of the furnace is in proportion to the depth of the shaft — the power being at the ratio of the depth.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE MINERS' NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

THE various miners' unions, which had arisen from the ashes of the American Miners' Association, had become strong and powerful in all the coal mining states; but having no general head, they seldom acted in concert. Strikes occurred in one field to resist a cut in wages, or for the redress of some other real or imaginary grievance; while adjoining fields continued working. Under such circumstances, the strikers were simply throwing away their time. During, and since the war, new railroads had been built into widely divergent fields, the coal of which went to the same market. The mining leaders saw that concert of action was necessary to prevent this cutting in detail, and that the time had come for the formation of a National Association of Miners.

John Siney, the president of the anthracite miners of Pennsylvania, was the most popular mining leader in the United States. He had organized and managed, with rare skill and judgment, the most turbulent constituency of miners in the world, and had beaten the most powerful corporations, led by business men of consummate ability, in great conflicts which had attracted the eyes of the nation. All the leaders turned to Siney as the man to head a call for a national convention of miners, and during the spring of 1873, the mining leaders were in communication with him on the subject.

The coal mining industry of the country had grown with amazing rapidity in the past decade. The total output of the mines for the year 1873, was in round numbers, 45,000, 000 tons. Pennsylvania was then, as she has ever been since,



JOHN SINEY, PRESIDENT MINERS' NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

the great coal-producing state. The anthracite fields alone produced 19,604,663 tons, nearly one-half of the entire output; while 11,695,383 tons were raised from the bituminous districts of the state.

Ohio was next to Pennsylvania in point of output; but was far in the rear in comparison, her whole product being 3,944,340 tons; the state of Illinois raised 3,500,000 tons; Maryland, 2,674,100 tons; Indiana, 1,000,000 tons; Missouri, 700,000 tons; West Virginia, 600,000 tons; Tennessee and Kentucky each about 300,000 tons. The other coal bearing states were either mainly raising coal for local consumption, or had not begun to mine it at all. The number of miners and mine laborers employed in and around the mines were, in round numbers, 105,500, of whom 44,000 were engaged in the anthracite fields and 29,200 in the bituminous districts of Pennsylvania; Ohio and Illinois each had about 10,000; Maryland, 4,800; Indiana, 2,600; Missouri, 1,800; West Virginia and Tennessee each about 500.

Organization was stronger in the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, than in any of the other coal-producing states. In the new coal regions of the west and south, combinations of workingmen had not yet taken place.

In the summer of 1873, an Industrial Congress of workingmen representing all trades, met in the city of Cleveland, Ohio. Upon the adjournment of the Congress, the miner delegates met for consultation in the parlors of the Forest City Hotel, and after discussing the situation, concluded to issue a call for a national convention of miners to meet in Youngstown, Ohio, on the second Tuesday of October. The call was written by Andrew Cameron, the talented editor of the *Workingmen's Advocate* of Chicago, and bears the impress of his gifted pen. It was signed by John Siney and a number of the best known mining leaders in the country. It ran as follows:

CALL FOR A NATIONAL CONVENTION.

*To the Miners of the United States:*

FELLOW-WORKMEN — It is a well-established fact — a fact demonstrated by bitter personal experience, that there is no class in the community whose labors are so unrequited, and who are so much the victims of the heartless demands of capital and corporations, as the miners. In our present isolated condition we are powerless to resist them. Increasing as their agencies are in power and influence, it requires no prophet to foretell the position the miner must occupy in a few years, unless immediate steps are taken to unite us under a common head, having for its objects the bettering of our social, moral and financial condition. The great desideratum of the hour is a bond of union, a consolidation of interests, a unity of action — in fact the establishment of a Miners' National Organization, whose influence will be exerted in our behalf, and whose strength will be sufficient to protect us in the hour of need. A contest too often forced upon us at present, means defeat and demoralization, no matter how just our demands; a contest in which a handful of men have to contend against the power of aggregated wealth. This crushing policy must be stopped, or it is idle to expect that our condition can be ameliorated.

The success which has attended the various trades which have acted on this principle, shows us what unity of action can accomplish. The difficulty against which we now contend, are the difficulties which they have surmounted and the reason is obvious. What the efforts of one union could not accomplish, the efforts of fifty unions have accomplished. What they have done, we can do, if we are willing to use the same means. These facts are so self evident that every miner and laborer in the mines must admit their force and strength. In consideration of these facts, believing that the miners are ripe for such a movement, and in accordance with the general desire evinced on all hands, we hereby issue a call for a meet-

ing of delegates from the various local unions, and to miners in general throughout the country, for the purpose of forming a Miners' National Union, to be held in the city of Youngstown, Ohio, on the second Tuesday in October, 1873.

The specific objects sought to be accomplished by the formation of such an Association are as follows:

1. A consolidation of the entire body of miners of the United States for the purpose of self-protection.

2. To afford pecuniary and moral support of such districts as may be forced to the alternative of a strike.

3. For a thorough discussion of our grievances and the passage of such laws as our safety and welfare demand in the several states.

Fellow-Workmen — One word in conclusion: Let every miner and laborer who reads this call, realize that it is in his interest that it is issued. Act as though success depended upon your individual efforts. Make a beginning. Where no union exists, form one without delay. Take steps to meet your fellow-workmen in counsel. Let the miners from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kentucky and Michigan — in short, from every locality where mining is carried on, "Come and reason together," form an organization in which brother will be pledged to brother, an organization which will form a bulwark alike in the day of prosperity and adversity. Will you do so, or do you prefer to occupy your present unenviable position? The answer and the issue are in your hands.

(Signed)

JOHN SINEY,  
St. Clair, Schuylkill Co., Pa.

JAS. O'HALLORAN,  
Plymouth, Lucerne Co., Pa.

GEO. KINGHORN,  
Belville, St. Clair Co., Ill.

JOHN POLLOCK,  
North Lawrence, Stark o., O.

JOHN JAMES,  
Braidwood, Will Co., Ill.

Communications addressed to John James, Braidwood, will receive prompt attention.

At this time there were a number of papers published in the interest of the miners, and some of them were owned by the local organizations, the more important of which were the *Anthracite Monitor*, *The Workingman*, and the *Weekly Record*, published in the hard coal region of Pennsylvania. *The National Labor Tribune* of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, was the official organ of the miners of the soft coal fields. *The Workingmen's Advocate* of Chicago, although not strictly speaking an official organ, was read in every intelligent miner's home. *The Miners' Journal* of Youngstown, Ohio, was the official organ of the miners of the Mahoning Valley.

The National Convention met in Youngstown, Ohio, on the 13th of October, 1873. Five of the leading mining States sent delegates, viz., Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and West Virginia. The convention was in session three days, and adopted a constitution which had been previously prepared by John James, of Illinois, modeled after the constitution of the Miners' National Association of Great Britain. Its basic principles were Arbitration, Conciliation and Co-operation.

The constitution provided in a general way for independent control of the local affairs of each district; but no strike could be ordered by any district officer until every other peaceable means had been exhausted, including an offer to arbitrate. A complete statement of the matters at issue was required to be sent to the president of the Association, and his consent obtained before a strike could be declared for any cause. If the president deemed it necessary, he was empowered to call upon the executive board, composed of a member from each State, represented in the organization, for consultation and advice. It was not intended that the strike as a weapon of defense should be dispensed with, the object being to reduce strikes to a minimum.

John Siney, of Pennsylvania, was elected president; John James of Illinois, secretary; David H. Davies of Ohio, treasurer; and Geo. Archbold of Pennsylvania, vice-president.

John Siney was a man of national reputation. At the time of his selection to this high office he was president of the Anthracite Miners' Union, and was receiving a salary of



JOHN JAMES.

\$1500 a year. He voluntarily resigned that office to assume the presidency of the National Association at a salary of \$1200 a year. While president of the Anthracite Miners' Union, he was frequently approached by the leading politicians of Pennsylvania and offered the nomination for Con-



gress, for the purpose of securing his influence in politics; but he was superior to political temptations and declined the offer, stating that he could not in justice to the organization which had honored him with its confidence, accept any political honor, nor interfere in any manner in politics.

John James, who was chosen secretary, was a man of superior education and intelligence. He had been a lieutenant of Alexander McDonald in Scotland and enjoyed the confidence in a high degree of that great leader of British miners. James had also been the leading spirit in organizing the Miners' Protective Association in Illinois. He was an honest, upright man, with a character above suspicion. At the time of his selection as secretary, he was engaged in the mercantile business at Braidwood, Ill., but sold his store and moved to Cleveland, Ohio, to accept a salary of \$100 a month.

David H. Davies, the treasurer, had been for a number of years, treasurer of the Mahoning Valley Miners' Association. The breath of suspicion had never been raised against him. He was careful and painstaking in his accounts, and there was never a mistake of a single cent in his books while he held the office of treasurer.

Geo. Archbold, the vice president, who came from the Pittsburg district, was highly respected, as an honest man and a safe counselor. The ablest and truest men in the ranks of the miners were thus placed in charge of the great organization. Cleveland, Ohio, was selected as the headquarters of the Association.

Almost simultaneously with the birth of the organization the disastrous panic of 1873 burst upon the country. Every business industry became paralyzed; many enterprises were crushed out of existence, and many more in contemplation never obtained a foothold. The demand for coal fell off fifty per cent. With such a state of affairs staring the new-born organization in the face, not a few clear-headed thinkers

among the miners believed it would be the part of wisdom for the officers-elect to allow the organization to go by default. But after a careful survey of the ground had been made it was concluded to proceed with the work.

Before the convention adjourned a resolution was adopted to put a corps of organizers into every mining region in the United States. In the selection of the delegates the members of the convention were allowed the privilege of naming them, President Siney confirming the nominations.

No sooner was the general office of the National Association opened in Cleveland, than Messrs. Siney and James visited the various coal companies in the city and made overtures for the establishment of friendly relations with them, stating that the national union officers would do all in their power to prevent strikes. All the companies, with one exception, peremptorily declined to have anything to do with the organization or its officers, declaring that they felt competent to manage their own business without the intermeddling of outsiders. The exception was Mark Hanna. He received the general officers courteously, requested to see the constitution of the association, which he read over carefully. He then asked Messrs. Siney and James, whether, in case the award of the umpire should go against the miners, would they abide by it; and whether in case the miners did not feel disposed to keep faith with the decision, had the general officers sufficient influence to prevent them from going out on strike? Messrs. Siney and James answered that if a decision went against the miners they would order them to continue work, and use every means in their power to prevent a strike. "Then," replied Mr. Hanna, "I am heartily with you, and will do all I can to have the operators submit all questions that may arise in future, to the decision of a board of arbitration."

Mr. Hanna not only kept his promise, but to the end of his life, labored to harmonize the interests of capital and

labor, in every branch of industry. The workingmen of the United States never had a more consistent, better or truer friend than Mark Hanna. The industrial masses owe him a debt of gratitude.

The work to which the delegates were assigned, was both trying and arduous, and required the exercise of patience, prudence, perseverance and charity. Although the powers of the organizers were limited, and their movements largely controlled by the general officers, they still occupied important and responsible places. The numerous causes of disputes and the proneness to strike for the redress of every grievance real or imaginary, was one of the chief disturbing elements which the delegates to the annual convention desired especially to guard against. The organizers were instructed to confine their work to their instructions, and neither to be beguiled nor cajoled to depart from an honest discharge of the same. They were not to cater to the prejudices of the miners, nor be afraid to say and do right.

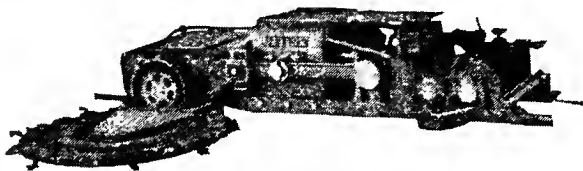
At the time the organizers went among the miners, their grievances were as plentiful as the varieties of their faces. They expected the national organization to change conditions with the suddenness of Aladdin's magic lantern or Prince Almed's apple; they wanted some magic specific to furnish immediate relief, and were chagrined and disappointed to find the organizers, whom they had greeted with a hearty welcome, promising slow and gradual benefit. The organizer, himself a miner, could only sympathize, but dared not encourage the use of the too ready weapon, the strike, which hung like a sword half unsheathed from the scabbard. The organizer preached patience, until the mists and darkness of the panic should be lifted from the business world, and the sun of prosperity once more shine resplendent in the industrial heaven. He advised the miners to secure all that was possible without resorting to a strike. The conditions, he

said, were against us, and the general officers were absolutely opposed to a strike at this time.

This philosophy was like shaking a red flag in the face of a wild bull to the wilder spirits among the mine workers. "If this is all the organization has to offer," they exclaimed, "we are better without it. If Messrs. Siney and James will not sanction a strike, let us strike in defiance of their instructions; we can not be worse off than we are at present. If we must starve to death, let us starve on strike and not on starvation wages and half work."

Although the Fabian policy which the executive board and the general officers of the association were pursuing was unpopular with the masses, there were many intelligent and thoughtful men in the ranks who endorsed it. These men thought that it was better to accept a reduction before a strike than to accept one after a strike with all the privation and bitterness, including a long list of victimized men, which would inevitably follow; that the true policy was to first build up a strong and powerful organization, and not deliver battle until the union could move in solid phalanx.

Notwithstanding the unparalleled depression in the coal trade the National Association continued to prosper, and when the second annual convention met in Cleveland, October 17, 1874, there were twenty-one thousand members enrolled on the books of the general secretary. The delegates were greatly pleased with the success of the organizers, and were hopeful that the times would soon improve so that a demand could be made along the whole line for an advance in wages and better conditions of employment.



LONG WALL MACHINE.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## ARBITRATION A FAILURE. — ARREST OF SINEY.

## CO-OPERATION ATTEMPTED.

THE basic principles upon which the Miners' National Association was founded had produced excellent results among the trade unions of Great Britain; many strikes, with their accompanying suffering and privation having been averted by this method of adjusting disputes between employers and employes. Not only in trade and business troubles had arbitration done noble service, but in the wider field of international questions, notably, the settlement of the Alabama claims, it had proved an agent of inestimable value to civilization and the world. But the parties in interest who agree to submit the settlement of a dispute to a board of arbitration must have honor enough to abide by the award of the board, otherwise the proceedings are a mere farce. The British government paid fifteen million dollars to the United States for damages done to our commerce by the Alabama. The public press and many of the leading citizens of the mother country protested against paying the award as unwarranted and unjust, but the government of Great Britain had honor enough to respect the decision of the board. Had war ensued, as it surely would, if Great Britain had declined to pay the fifteen million dollars, thousands of as brave men as ever trod the earth, and hundreds of millions of money would have been sacrificed and civilization itself arrested.

There were several attempts made to settle wage disputes by arbitration, during the fitful and feverish existence of the National Association, but only in one instance was the

principle fairly tested, and as in the case of the anthracite miners, it proved an utter failure. Toward the close of the year 1874, the miners of the Tuscarawas Valley of Ohio, were notified that the price of mining would be reduced from 90 to 70 cents per ton, and other labor in proportion.

The general officers of the union sent the Valley operators a copy of the constitution and by-laws of the Association, and suggested arbitration as a means of settling the questions at issue. The miners of the valley were not only good fighters, but had for a number of years under the able leadership of John Pollock of North Lawrence, been paid higher wages than any other district in the state. They had indignantly spurned the proposed reduction and had determined to resist it by a strike.

A meeting of miners' delegates, at the suggestion of John Siney, met their employers in Akron, at which both sides agreed to submit the matter to the decision of a board of arbitration. The miners appointed William Thomson, John Pollock, and John Graham as their representatives, and the operators chose Messrs. Loomis, Wagner and Mark Hanna to represent their side. The venerable Judge Andrews of Cleveland, was selected to act as umpire. The board met in the office of the Rhodes Coal Co., and heard the statements and arguments of both parties in interest. The decision of the umpire was almost wholly against the miners, the price of mining being fixed at 71 cents per ton. At a subsequent meeting of the board some concession were made by the operators. The miners, as was natural, accepted the award in a sullen frame of mind.

Under existing circumstances the decision of Judge Andrews was just and fair. The miners of the Valley had up to this time maintained prices which obtained before the panic set in. This was the first cut, while competing fields had made reductions corresponding to the award of the umpire. The miners felt that they could have secured better

terms by a strike. They, however, accepted the decision and continued work. The general officers of the association strove to disabuse their minds against the feeling of unfairness which they held in regard to the decision of the umpire, and advised them to loyally accept the award.

The settlement was not of long duration. The Crawford Coal Company, which operated mines in the same district, had locked out its miners during the arbitration negotiations. This company did not belong to the operators' union, nor did their miners belong to the National Association. The lock-out originated in the refusal of the company to permit a check-weighman at the scales. They appealed to the operators' union to make common cause against the demand of the miners for check-weighmen, a proposition the operators' union promptly declined. Thereupon the Crawford Company proposed to their miners that if they would withdraw their demand the company would advance the rate of mining nine cents above the award of Judge Andrews. The non-union miners promptly accepted this proposition and returned to work.

The union miners, who had sullenly accepted the nineteen cent cut, appealed to the general officers of the National Association to be absolved from the decision of the umpire, and President Siney at once called the executive board together to consider the matter. After hearing the arguments of the miners' representatives, the board decided to endorse the miners' appeal, and release them from the award of the board of arbitration. The operators' union requested to be heard before the miners' executive board, but were denied.

The union miners were not slow to ask the operators to be placed on an equal footing with those of the Crawford Company, and at a mass-meeting held on the 15th of April, at the Furnace Green near Massillon, a formal demand was made for a nine cent advance, which all of the coal companies affected, granted after a short suspension. The officers

of the union were roundly berated for their failure to secure better terms from the board of arbitration. The friends of arbitration among both miners and operators felt that a settlement of wage disputes by this system had received a bad blow, and were correspondingly depressed.

On the first of August a reduction of ten cents was proposed, but declined, and a compromise made on 75 cents. This price obtained in the Valley for the balance of the year, and continued until the 1st of March, 1875, when notice was served on the miners that a reduction would be made to 65 cents. William Thomson, the State president, advised the men to compromise on 70 cents, but no attention was paid to his advice. The wilder spirits of the union branded the officers of the union as frauds and traitors, and a strike was declared.

The operators decided to bring in new men to break the strike, and having collected a needy force from Cleveland, put them to work in the Warmington mine, a few miles south of Massillon. The strikers, learning that a second contingent would be sent down from Cleveland, called a mass-meeting at the Warmington mine on the day the strike-breakers would arrive. It was the intention of the strikers to invite the new miners to the meeting, and explain to them the wrong they were doing in taking the places of men on strike. The meeting, which consisted of several hundred of the strikers, had organized and was being addressed by one of the leaders, who was counseling the men on no account to resort to violence, when two car-loads of the strangers came around the curve below the mine. The strikers gave a yell and made a break for the mine. Pandemonium broken loose could not have surpassed the scene. An orderly meeting was in an instant converted into a howling mob by the presence of the strangers. The few cool heads who tried to get the ear of the wild and tumultuous crowd, might as well have preached to the wind.



Mr. Warmington, the president of the coal company, who had the new men in charge, ordered the strikers to halt. He drew a pistol and threatened to shoot the first man who moved another step. The strikers gave a yell of defiance, rushed forward, knocked Warmington down, and would have beaten him to death, but for the heroic conduct of two of their number — Bennet Brown and William Elwood — who rushed into the infuriated crowd to rescue the unfortunate man. Brown, who was a man of very high spirit, a stranger to fear, and a great lover of fair play, raised the prostrate mine owner to his shoulders and bore him out of the mob. As he lifted Warmington, one of the mob put a pistol to Brown's head and ordered him to throw the mine owner down. Brown denounced the rioter as a cowardly miscreant, and paid no attention to his threat. Warmington was placed, bleeding and half dead, in a buggy, and driven to Massillon.

The operators appealed to the sheriff of the county for protection, and the sheriff, believing himself unable to protect the new miners with any posse he could raise in the county, made a requisition on the governor for troops.

The governor answered the sheriff's requisition by issuing a proclamation commanding all rioters to disperse, and threatening them with the vengeance of the law in case they refused to do so. But this proclamation did not please the operators, and the governor sent his adjutant general to the scene of disturbance, who reported that unless troops were sent to protect the new miners, it would be difficult if not impossible for the operators to start the mines with them. Thereupon the governor sent a company of troops to the sheriff.

The militia were placed at the Warmington mine. The Rhodes Coal Company, which had an interest in the Warmington mine, owned four other mines in the Tuscarawas Valley. The strikers, who blamed the Rhodes Company for causing the troops to be brought into the Valley, determined to

revenge themselves on this company. The night following the appearance of the troops, bodies of the strikers, with blackened faces and dressed in fantastic garments, appeared at each of the Rhodes mines, captured the engineers and night-watchmen, placed them under cars and set all of the mines of this company on fire. A strike is lost when strikers resort to acts of such vandalism, and so it proved in this case.

A large number of the rioters were arrested; public opinion was greatly incensed against the prisoners, and it was found difficult to secure an attorney to defend them. In the trial which followed, a young lawyer, with a classic forehead and a fine presence, volunteered to defend the prisoners. In his address to the jury he drew a picture at the scene of the Warmington riot which brought tears from eyes unused to weeping; he depicted the miners, convened at the Warmington mine, for the purpose of appealing to the new miners not to take the places of the men on strike. As the cars came in sight, and the strikers marched toward it, they were confronted with the mouth of a revolver and the sight of men come to take away the work that fed their wives and little children. The miners, exclaimed the young attorney, became insane, and did not know what they were doing; they were not responsible for their acts, and he demanded the acquittal of the accused. The young attorney was William McKinley, afterward president of the United States.

The unfortunate outcome of the arbitration proceedings in the Tuscarawas Valley of Ohio, in the early part of the year 1875, was followed by a still more unfortunate occurrence during the summer in the Clearfield region of Pennsylvania, which produced a crisis in the affairs of the organization. Xingo Parks of Pennsylvania, a man of sudden impulses, of an unwise head, but of undoubted honesty, was sent into the Clearfield region of that state as an organizer. He had been quite successful in his mission, but the

miners were no sooner organized than they made a demand for an increase of wages, and for the redress of a number of grievances. The general officers advised the men to make the best terms they could with their employers, and on no account to strike. Notwithstanding this excellent advice, a portion of the miners struck. The operators whose mines were tied up by the strike, proposed to bring in new men. Parks whose discretion was not equal to his valor, warned the operators that if strike-breakers were imported they would be sent out of Clearfield in wooden overcoats.

The strikers, who had disregarded the orders of Siney, sent for him now that they were in distress; and Siney, true to his devotion to the cause of the miners, even when hopelessly in the wrong, made haste to visit the district. He and Xingo Parks attended several meetings to discuss the situation, and counsel and advise the strikers in regard to the best means to be pursued to keep the imported men from taking the places of the miners on strike. The operators had detectives at every meeting that Siney and Parks attended, who took shorthand notes of their speeches, and of the unguarded utterances of Parks; and both were arrested, charged with conspiracy and inciting to riot. True bills were found against both by the grand jury, and their trial was set for the next term of court in Clearfield. They were readily admitted to bail, their bond being \$500 each, and their trial was called as originally arranged.

The third annual convention of the National Association which was held in Cleveland, in the general office, October 1875, although discouraged by the arrest of Siney, found an increased membership enrollment, there being 35,000 members in good standing on the books of the general secretary. A resolution was passed directing President Siney to go into the new coal field of Tennessee, along the line of the Cincinnati Southern Railroad, then in course of construction, and purchase several thousand acres of coal

lands for the purpose of opening and working mines on the co-operative plan, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution of the Association. The forthcoming trial of Siney and Parks was taken up and a resolution passed to fight the coal companies and the Pennsylvania railroad, at whose instance the arrests had been made. The general officers were instructed to engage the best legal talent in the United States and to leave no stone unturned to acquit the officers of the Association.

John Siney, as directed by the executive board, went to Tennessee to examine the coal on the line of the Cincinnati Southern Railway, with a view to purchasing a large tract of coal lands to start a mining company on the co-operative plan. Andrew Roy was engaged to accompany Siney on the trip to report on the coal.

Arriving at Chattanooga, the representatives of industrial co-operation found royal treatment at the hands of a large owner of coal land on the new railroad, who not only invited the miners' agents to make his house their home while they sojourned in Chattanooga, but placed his carriage at their service to visit Lookout Mountain, and sent his colored coachman to drive them over the famous battleground above the clouds.

Major Wade Hampton, a nephew of the famous statesman and soldier, accompanied Siney and Roy over the new railroad. The journey was made on horseback, and the strata along the road carefully examined. On the way back the engineer, who was an indifferent horseman and preferred to examine the strata on foot, gave his horse to a pedestrian who was walking into Kingston. He was soon left behind, and did not put in an appearance in Kingston for three hours after the two horesmen had arrived there. Siney was in a state of uncontrollable excitement, fearing his associate had been murdered.

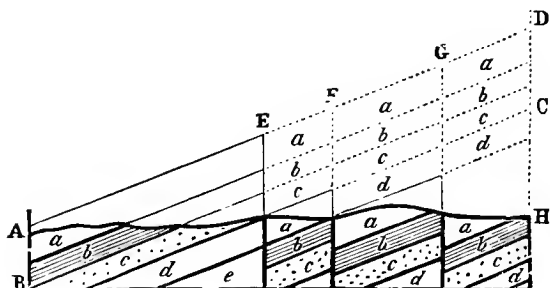
Returning to Chattanooga by river, an option was taken on ten thousand acres of coal lands, and placed in the hands of Secretary John James, with instructions to open books for subscriptions to purchase the property. Shares were to be sold at \$5.00 each; every share-holder to be allotted five acres of land on which to build a home. But few shares were ever sold. The strikes which had occurred during the early part of the year — in every case against the advice of the general officers — were unsuccessful, and had soured the temper of the miners.

The arrest of Siney had created a profound sensation, not only in labor circles all over the United States, but among the business and public men as well. He was the best known man in the ranks of organized labor in this country, and was universally liked and respected by all the labor organizations. His character was, however, not understood by the business men of the country, and he was hated and feared by the coal and railway companies. The newspapers in the interest of these constituencies had for years held him up before the public as a demagogue, who did nothing but foment discord between the coal companies and their employes.

Hon. William A. Wallace, United States Senator of Pennsylvania, one of the foremost corporation lawyers of that state, had been engaged to assist the prosecuting attorney of Clearfield county. The officers of the miners' union saw in this arrangement a determined purpose to convict Siney and break up the Miners' National Association, and they secured the services of the Hon. Matthew Carpenter, ex-United States Senator of Wisconsin, to defend Siney and Parks. The Hon. Benjamin F. Butler, of Massachusetts, voluntarily offered his services. The best legal talent was brought into the case. The trial was watched with the keenest interest by all employers of labor throughout the United States, and the labor unions were no less interested.

Siney and Parks were tried together. This was resolved on from the first by the prosecution, and was allowed by the defense, but for different reasons. The parties prosecuting were confident that they had evidence that would convict both; the defense felt equally confident that Siney could not be convicted, but were afraid of Parks; and were so confident of the acquittal of Siney that they were willing to run the risk of hurting him for the purpose of saving Parks.

The conspiracy law of Pennsylvania, under which the cases were tried, was the common law of England, when the commonwealth of Pennsylvania was founded by William Penn, and carried with it a penalty of from one to seven years' imprisonment in the penitentiary for any violation of its provisions. The law had been long amended in England. It had long remained a dead letter in Pennsylvania, and had been resurrected by the Pennsylvania Railway Company and the coal operators for the specific purpose of sending Siney to the penitentiary and breaking up the Miners' National Association. One of the fortunate results of the trial was the repeal of the conspiracy provision of this law at the next meeting of the Legislature, or rather its amendment in line with the right to form labor organizations and strike for higher wages, or to resist a proposed reduction, and to allow workmen the right to dissuade, by peaceable means, new men from taking the place of men on strike.



## CHAPTER XV.

## TRIAL AND ACQUITTAL OF SINEY.

THE notes of newspaper reporters and of shorthand writers, who had been sent to the meetings which Siney and Parks addressed, as well as the testimony of the special police, were relied on to convict the two miners. An attempt was also made to convict the Miners' National Association on the ground that the union, while masquerading as a peaceful organization, was neither more nor less than a lawless gang, equally guilty with Siney and Parks of flagrant violation of the conspiracy laws of the state of Pennsylvania. The acts and sayings of Siney and Parks, it was claimed, were the official acts and utterances of the Miners' National Association. The printed instructions of the organizers, the constitution and by-laws of the union, the letters and telegrams of Secretary John James to Siney and Parks, were admitted in evidence. To this the defense offered no objection; on the contrary were as anxious as the prosecution to have such evidence submitted, and it made a favorable impression on the jury.

When it became known that the testimony was all in, the court house was soon jammed full of spectators to listen to the display of oratory by the eminent statesmen and lawyers on both sides of the case. It was an exhibition of forensic skill seldom witnessed in any court house. A brief epitome of the addresses of Senators Carpenter and Wallace is here given.

"Among all the states of the American Union," said Senator Carpenter, "Pennsylvania has by the skill of her workmen and the wonderful resources which a bountiful nature

has provided, taken the second place in population and wealth. Her coal, her iron and other industries, together with her transportation and commercial facilities were in the lead with the most advanced commonwealths in the world.

"In every walk of life her citizens were equal in intelligence, in progress, in thrift, in integrity, and in manly and correct aspirations to those of any other people; in the ordinary affairs of life he saw no difference between the people of his beloved Wisconsin and those of the Keystone State. He did not believe that one man in a hundred would be disposed to be less liberal, less just in the state of Pennsylvania, to the men fulfilling the demand of the Creator, who has said: 'By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread,' than the government of the mother country against which they rebelled a hundred years ago. The conspiracy law under which it is sought to convict John Siney and Xingo Parks, was brought over from England in colonial days, and has long been repealed in Great Britain. In every city of any consequence, men occupying honorable places in society were every day doing, with impunity, that for which these men at the bar were being tried. This law, of which it could be confidently said, 'was more honored in the breach than the observance,' and which had served the purpose of its makers, no doubt, well for years, was now resurrected to punish and to intimidate the very men, the sons of toil, who had contributed and were still contributing to make their country great. In the evolutions of the past hundred years of progress and advancement, the people of Pennsylvania, had long since gone past and distanced the provisions of the conspiracy law. The newer states had by their statutes exempted labor unions and commercial societies from criminal prosecution for combining for self interest. None of the older states had retained this ancient legal provision of old mother England. After what the other states had long ago abrogated as unjust, unnecessary and antiquated in the government of



their citizens, has the public to understand that Pennsylvania must still resort to obsolete laws to make her workingmen good? If this court, and this jury, must use this instrument of by-gone ages, what must be the opinion of the other states? Are they to understand that the bread-winners of this busy, powerful and opulent state, can only be kept under control by such means? If so, then must they believe something, which I do not believe! nor can I from any testimony adduced in the trial of this case permit myself to think, that the men who go down into the very bowels of the earth to bring forth the stores which the good God had, millions of years ago, hidden away for the use and comfort of man, are any worse than those of any other political divisions of our country. I can not think that the state of Pennsylvania will feel called upon to resort to this extraordinary measure to defend the majesty of the law at this or any other time. Those men at the bar are the officers chosen to represent the mining districts of the state—the whole state. John Siney is president of their National Union, and Xingo Parks is the organizer of the union. The union they represent has been shown, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of the able counsel for the prosecution, to make it appear otherwise, to be of sound morality and excellent purpose. Nothing in the constitution and by-laws as submitted to the court, could be excepted to anywhere, unless it be the provisions of the law under which they are being tried, which prohibits combinations of any kind that have for their purpose the raising or lowering of wages, or values of any commodity. If you convict John Siney and Xingo Parks under this law, will it be, in the minds of a reading and intelligent public, John Siney or Xingo Parks, or the County of Clearfield and the State of Pennsylvania, that is disgraced? This I leave to you, gentlemen of the jury, by your verdict to decide.”

Senator Wallace’s argument was keen and strong. He dwelt convincingly on what the eloquent ex-senator from

Wisconsin had told the court and jury. Regarding the antiquity of the conspiracy law now in force in the state, of which he was proud to be a citizen, he declared that there was nothing for honest men to fear or be ashamed of.

"Were the provisions of the Decalogue bad because they were old and antiquated by long gone centuries? The people do not think so.

"No man e'er felt the halter draw

With good opinion of the law."

"Whatever other states, old or new, may have done with regard to labor or conspiracy laws, it was their privilege or their right so to do. The state of Pennsylvania had throughout all the years, including the days of the good William Penn, lived under these laws and according to the learned counsel has become powerful and opulent under them. She has by her energy and her freedom been able to attain the second place in the galaxy of states. Has this law in any manner retarded or intimidated her toiling millions? If it had, it would have been amended long ago, to comply with the necessities of the times. That no change has been made, or sought to be made, in its provisions, was the strongest proof in logic that there had been no demand for its amendment or repeal. In a state where the workingmen were the great mass of voters, is it possible that this law could have remained on the statute books all these years if it had been oppressive or objectionable to the toiling masses? The only question for this court and this jury to determine is: Are those men guilty of a violation of its provisions? If they are guilty, and I believe they are, and it has been shown by the testimony that they are, it is the plain duty of the jury to find them guilty; and the plain duty of the court to sentence them under the law.

"John Siney, President of the Miners' National Association, and Xingo Parks, its organizer, who are they? They do not live in this county; they do not own any interests in

the coal mines of this county; they do not work in the coal mines of this county; they own no property in the county; and yet they attempt to dictate to those who own and operate these mines, and to say to our miners who work in them, how the mines shall be operated, and what wages the miners must work for; that the mine operators and the mine workers of our mines shall run them on such terms only as this union and its officers shall dictate. It has come to a pretty pass if this coal which underlies these beautiful mountains could not, in peace and on terms and conditions which its owners choose to offer, be mined and taken out day by day, week by week, to meet the requirements of commerce and trade of the people. It has come to a pretty pass if the people who own this county are not to be allowed to follow their own methods in the management of their own properties; but must needs have outsiders who have no interest here, come in and say to them what they shall and shall not do.

“Shall this court and this jury fear to punish these men for criminal violation of our law because the counsel for the defense says our law is old? Setting aside that provision which makes it a crime to combine for the purpose stated, if that could be done, and it can not be done, every state in the Union has a conspiracy law, also a law which makes riot a crime. By the testimony, these men, John Siney and Xingo Parks, did assist in this combination of miners for the purpose of raising wages, and it is your bounden duty under the provisions of the law, to bring in a verdict of guilty?”

The jury acquitted Siney but convicted Parks of riot and inciting to riot, and he was sentenced to one year in the penitentiary. One of the counsel for the defense tried to excite the sympathy of the jury by representing Parks as a poor ignorant Irish boy, who had not intelligence enough to know that he was doing wrong. Parks, who was an American and proud of his nativity, disavowed all claims to sympathy on this score. He was not confined long in the

penitentiary, being pardoned by Governor Hartranft and sent home to his wife and little family.

Siney and Parks were not the only men arrested on this occasion; but either the grand jury failed to find true bills against the others, or they were nollied by the prosecuting attorney of the county. While the trial caused an amendment to be made to the conspiracy laws of Pennsylvania at the next meeting of the Legislature, it had the effect which the Pennsylvania Railway Company and the coal operators desired — the overthrow of the miners' organization in the Clearfield region.

The Hon. Matthew Carpenter, who so ably defended the two miner leaders, gave his time and his money free to the cause.

The jury in the acquittal of Siney not only greatly disappointed the railway and coal companies, but even the judge who tried the case. Siney himself expected the jury to convict him. He told the author a short time before the trial came off that the doors of the penitentiary were standing wide open to receive him. The masterful manner in which the case was handled by Senator Carpenter and his associate counsel alone saved the modest and unassuming president of the Miners' National Association. The jury took the view urged by Senator Carpenter, that the law was obsolete, a relic of by-gone ages, disregarded every day by every combination of labor and business in the State.

The beginning of the year 1876 found the Miners' National Association powerful and prosperous; and the general officers of the union full of high hope for its future. The middle of the year found the organization weak and declining, and the minds of the leaders correspondingly depressed. The eminently wise and far-seeing policy advocated by Messrs. Siney and James not to strike, but to make the best terms that they could with the employers until the industrial clouds which enveloped every business enterprise had rolled away

was very unpopular with the rank and file of the Association. Over-production, a glutted market, mines not working half-time, had forced down the price of coal and made wages a ready object of attack. To strike under such circumstances was to invite defeat. For a time the Fabian tactics of the General officers was reluctantly respected and obeyed. But the miners soon tired of this timid and submissive policy, and appeal after appeal came to the general officers asking the Association to sanction a strike. In the hopes of arresting this pressure, the general officers issued a circular and sent it to every lodge in the organization urging the men on no account to strike; but to make the best terms they could under the existing circumstances. The circular was read in anger, and was answered by indignant protests. A series of losing strikes were inaugurated in nearly every mining district, and when work was resumed the lodges in too many cases declined to send in their assessments to the general office. Indeed they were not able to do so.

The unfortunate outcome of the arbitration proceedings, the arrest and trial of Siney under the obsolete conspiracy laws of Pennsylvania, together with the numerous bitter and protracted strikes during the early months of 1876, so seriously crippled the organization as to fill the minds of Siney and James, and all the best minds among the miners with grief and alarm. Siney and James put forth superhuman efforts to arrest the work of disintegration, but to no purpose; the miners had become sullen and disaffected; the union had brought them no redress. On the contrary wages were lowered, work was poorer, and harder conditions of employment had been forced on them which were more obnoxious than those existing before the National Association was organized.

During the summer of 1876, the income of the Association was not sufficient to meet the running expenses of the general office. John Siney as president and John James as general

secretary had been elected to serve until October. Siney, who had been receiving fifteen hundred dollars a year as president of the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association of the Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania, and had resigned that office to accept the presidency of the Miners' National Association, at a salary of twelve hundred dollars per annum, refused to accept any salary at all out of the meager exchequer of the National Association when he saw that the miners had lost confidence in him. Poor, old and maligned, the man who had given the best years of his life to his fellow-miners, turned the office over to Secretary James and returned to his home in St. Clair, Pennsylvania, to die. James remained at his post until the expiration of his term of office, and before closing it up, paid all the debts of the office out of his own pocket. The National Association when he closed up the general office owed him upward of seven hundred dollars. James died in 1903.

The collapse of the Miners' National Association was no fault of its general officers; but of the conditions of the country when it was organized. Never were more able or more unselfish men placed at the head of a labor union than John Siney and John James; but it was beyond human power to maintain wages, or ameliorate the miners' conditions during those years of idle mines, idle furnaces, idle mills and other idle industrial establishments where coal was consumed. The scramble for business by the coal companies produced the fiercest kind of competition. Profits which had hitherto been earned were swept ruthlessly away.

If the Miners' National Association failed to give effect to the purposes for which it was organized (arbitration, conciliation, co-operation and the abolishment of the barbarous method of strikes) it helped to furnish a chart to assist its successor — The United Mine Workers of America — to do more efficient service for the miners of the United States. Siney was a profound student of the labor question; he held

broader, more comprehensive and more liberal views on the subject in his riper years, and was ahead of the miners. He saw farther than they saw, and was too honest, too frank, too devoted to the well-being of labor's amelioration, to sanction a policy, which, although popular with the unthinking, was sure to end in disaster. His modesty, his honesty, his frankness were marked traits of his character. He was gentle as a child, and it could be said of him as Anthony said of Brutus: "The elements were so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world: This was a man."

John Siney died at his home in St. Clair, Pennsylvania, on the 16th day of April, 1880, and was buried in the cemetery of St. Mary's Church. He was no sooner laid away in his last resting place than the miners of the United States began to realize how great and good a friend they had lost. Expressions of heart-felt sorrow were heard at every coal mine in the United States; and an agitation was at once begun through the columns of the *National Labor Tribune* of Pittsburg by the leading miners of the country for the erection by the mine workers of a suitable monument to his memory. A fund was raised under the auspices of the Miners' and Laborers' Amalgamated Association, and a granite monument was erected in the fall of 1888. On the first of November of that year, the monument was unveiled amidst imposing ceremonies. Addresses were made touching the life and character of Siney by Hon. John Parker, the editor of the *Tri-Weekly Record*, his successor as president of the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association of the anthracite miners, and by other leaders in that coal field. The monument bears the following inscription:

"Erected to John Siney by his admiring friends, under the auspices of the M. and L. B. A. in memory of his firm devotion to the cause of labor."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## PENNSYLVANIA AND OHIO MINERS FORM STATE UNIONS.

WITH the collapse of the Miners' National Association in the fall of 1876, the mine workers were greatly depressed. Their great organization, from which so much had been expected, had gone down, leaving the miners in worse condition than it found them. The thoughtless and fault-finding in the ranks, unable to comprehend the environments, which tramelled trade conditions, were disposed to blame the general officers, but the far-seeing and level-headed men, not only among the miners, but in all the trades, felt that the affairs of the organization had been managed with consummate skill and judgment, and that if success had been possible, John Siney and John James would have commanded it. And yet failure was success, for the miners had learned a lesson of more value to their future well-being than if victory and not defeat had resulted. They had learned that as there is a time to eat and a time to sleep, a time to work and a time to rest, so also there was a time to strike, and that to strike at the wrong time, no matter what fighting qualities they might exhibit, failure must result. The mine workers had learned too, that when they elect officers to look after their interests, they must give them their confidence, and cease their chronic criticism and fault-finding. The lesson they learned was a dear one, but it was worth the cost to the craft.

During the season of greatest depression of the panic of 1873-9, a secret organization began to spread among the miners. This was the Knights of Labor, destined during the following decade to wield a powerful influence in the world of labor; that influence was wholesome and good. This



society was organized in 1870 by Uriah S. Stephens, a workingman of great natural ability, great purity of character and intensely devoted to the amelioration of labor. He was the first General Master Workman of the order, and his memory is held in grateful remembrance by the industrial masses of America.

The panic had spent its force in the summer of 1879. Business had begun to revive; the coal industry sharing in the upward tendency of prices, and in the ready market for the sale of coal. Labor was in demand. The tramp was disappearing from the land. Now was the time for labor to assert itself, and to demand its share of returning prosperity.

The miners of the Monongahela and Youghiogeny rivers were the first to do so. A number of local assemblies of the K. of L., composed largely of miners, had been organized in the Pittsburg district through whose influence a demand for an advance in wages was made in the spring of 1879. The demand was made too soon, and the operators declined to accede to it. A strike resulted which extended over the greater part of the spring run. The miners had exhausted their resources and were on the point of giving up the fight, when a young lawyer, David R. Jones, advised them to continue the struggle a week or two longer.

David R. Jones had been a miner until he reached the age of 18 years. He was of Welsh parentage, and by self-denial, honesty of purpose and perseverance of character, was striving to rise above his environments. He determined to give himself a college education. He went four years to Mt. Union College in Ohio, and had graduated and was studying law in Pittsburg, when noticing the boom in business, and that the operators, who were daily in receipt of orders for coal at constantly increasing prices, would accede to the demands of the miners, if the latter were to remain firm a week or two longer, gave them the advice which won the strike.

The miners of the Pittsburg field, emboldened by the success attending Jones' interference in their affairs, organized at once and elected him president of their union. The miners gave him their unbounded confidence, and were ready and willing to follow wherever he would lead. He had no assistance whatever, and was as much of an autocrat as the Czar of Russia. There were neither vice-president, secretary, treasurer or executive committee to advise or suggest. Every miner a member of the union, paid him five cents a month as his salary. As every industry was booming and prices were advancing from Maine to California, Jones by a bold and skillful use of his authority, was able to threaten the operators and wring concessions from them which they could not afford to question. He wore a broad-brimmed hat and was known to every business man in Pittsburg. As he passed along the street, men paused to look at him and say to one another, "That's Jones."

With the return of prosperity, the miners in other fields began to call meetings and talk up organization for the purpose of demanding a share of the rapidly increasing prices of coal. The miners of the Tuscarawas Valley of Ohio, who have always been terrible fighters, were among the first to assert themselves. Under the leadership of John McBride, a young man of good education, who possessed the magnetic quality which draws men toward a leader, a state organization was formed, of which he was chosen president. A convention of miners of the Tuscarawas Valley met in Clinton and requested the operators to advance the price of mining ten cents a ton. Five days later, October 11th, the request was complied with. In November the miners of the Hocking Valley, learning that the towns of Southern Ohio were experiencing a coal famine, owing to low water in the river, which their employers had taken advantage of to raise the price of coal, made a demand for an advance of 50 cents per ton, which was promptly allowed. Other districts in the

state made similar demands, all of which were conceded without a struggle. Indeed such was the upward tendency of wages during the early months of prosperity, that the price of mining rose to a dollar a ton, although the miners were not able to hold this price more than a few weeks.

Meantime McBride, seconded by Bennet Brown, William A. Davis and other earnest miners of the Tuscarawas Valley, set about perfecting the state union. But an unfortunate strike occurred over the question of weighing the miners' coal before screening, and handicapped all efforts in the district. The coal producers of the Tuscarawas Valley agreed to abandon the system if their competitors in adjoining fields could be induced to do so. An interstate convention was called to meet in Pittsburg, March, 1880, to which delegates were selected at a state convention of Ohio Miners held in Mansfield at which every mining district in Ohio was represented. Grievances of long standing were to be acted upon at the Pittsburg convention which it would require years of persistent efforts to eradicate. A brief statement of these grievances and the causes which brought them into being is due at this point.

When the coal mining industry began to develop in the various coal fields of the United States, the first mines opened were generally located in isolated districts. The coal companies, to accommodate their employes, built stores in connection with the mines. These stores, which at first were a necessity, soon grew into tyranny. Prices were generally much higher than those of independent enterprises, while the goods sold were inferior in quality. The miners dubbed the company stores, "pluck me stores," and became restless and discontented at being required to pay higher prices for the necessities of life and receiving in return an inferior quality of goods. This treatment developed into a deep-seated grievance.

The system of weighing the miners' coal also became a disturbing element. The miner was paid for lump coal only, all that passed through the screen being deducted in weighing. The screenings were sold by the company in two grades known as "nut" and "pea" at reduced rates, and the miner thought that as he had mined and loaded this coal, he was entitled to a proportionate share of the sales. The operator, on the other hand, contended that he paid a proportionately higher price for lump, and that if he adopted the system the miners demanded, an inferior grade would be mined.

The miner also complained that owing to his hazardous occupation he ought to work fewer hours than skilled or unskilled laborers who toil in God's sunlight amidst a pure and bracing atmosphere. These grievances had been the subject of endless discussion among the miners ever since the beginning of the coal industry of the country, but they had become too deep-seated to be eradicated by a single struggle. Time, persistent effort, and intelligent leadership were necessary to uproot them.

The interstate convention which met at Pittsburg, March 17th, was in session three days, and passed resolutions demanding weight for all merchantable coal; eight hours to constitute a day's work; and the abolition of the "pluck me store" system. The first of August, 1880, was set as the date when the new conditions were to take effect. A refusal to comply on the part of the operators was to be met by a general strike.

In the meantime the miners of the Tuscarawas Valley were still engaged in a struggle for the abolition of the screen system. During the month of April—the strike having been on four months—negroes were imported to break it up. The following month, the miners at a mass meeting held at Massillon, declared the strike off by the acceptance of the operators' terms. The Hocking Valley miners and those of Jackson county rejected the screen resolu-

tion on the ground that they were not prepared to enter into a protracted contest with their employers on the question. The Pennsylvania miners paid no attention to the resolutions. Miners had to learn that it would require "A long pull, a



JOHN M'BRIDE.

strong pull and a pull all together" to get rid of this troublesome question, and that only by concerted action through a national organization, was there any possible hope of eradica-

ing it. The time for the contest was opportune; but the union of forces was lacking.

The defeat of the Tuscarawas Valley miners in their contest to abolish the screens, so discouraged the strikers that the state union, which had its stronghold in that valley, went down. McBride was victimized, and being unable to secure employment at the mines, accepted a place on the police force of Massillon. But his heart was on his subterranean workshop. In the early part of 1882, he was the leading spirit in organizing the Ohio Miners' Amalgamated Association, and was elected its president. By personal solicitation, and eloquent appeal, he soon had the miners of the state fairly well organized. He was annually elected president of this association until the year 1889, when he became president of the Miners' National Progressive Union.

The mantle of John Siney could not have fallen on more worthy shoulders. McBride was born in Wayne county, Ohio, June 25, 1854, and received a good common school education in the public schools of his native state. At the age of fifteen he was taken to the mines of Stark county by his father, who was an intelligent and enthusiastic trades unionist. In 1882, McBride was one of the charter members of Lodge No. 15 of the M. & L. B. A., and was its secretary until the lodge was merged in the Miners' National Association, of which John Siney was president. He was a delegate to and secretary of the convention which arranged for arbitration between the miners and operators of the Tuscarawas Valley, in 1874.

In 1884, while president of the Ohio Miners' Amalgamated Association, McBride was elected a member of the State Legislature from Stark county, and was re-elected to the same position in 1886. During the four years he was in the General Assembly, he aided in shaping and passing a number of important measures in the interest of the workingmen of

the state. In 1891, Governor Campbell appointed him State Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In 1892, McBride was elected to the presidency of the United Mine Workers of America, succeeding John B. Rae. He was re-elected each succeeding year, until 1895, when he resigned to accept the presidency of the American Federation of Labor. The United Mine Workers of America testified to their appreciation of his services by electing him an honorary member of the organization.



WM. SPEARS,  
A Veteran Mine Superintendent, of Brazil, Indiana.

## CHAPTER XVII.

MINING CATASTROPHES. — THE BLUE ROCK ACCIDENT.

THE DIAMOND CATASTROPHE. — THE NANTICOKE

HORROR. — THE JEANSVILLE INDUNDATION.

**M**ORE than ten thousand miners are killed and seriously wounded annually, in the pursuit of their calling, in the coal mines of the United States. Inundations of water, explosions of fire-damp, crushing of the superintendent strata, falls of roof and coal, are the dangerous forces which deal death and destruction in the gloomy recesses of the mine. The good people of our country little think, as they sit by a cheerful fire, and listen to the howling of the fierce winter wind without, what it costs in human life to mine coal.

It would fill many volumes to recount these mining catastrophes, and to record the noble heroism they bring out on the part of comrades. Scenes of daring, which warm the heart and inspire the soul, are performed, not in the hope of pecuniary reward, but in the noble spirit of genuine Christianity, on the occasion of every mining calamity. Some of the noblest deeds ever performed by man, which had they occurred on the battlefield, would have been rewarded with public honor and emolument, have been exhibited in rescuing imperilled comrades.

One of the first alarming accidents in the United States occurred in a coal mine in the state of Ohio, in the year 1856, at Blue Rock on the Muskingum river. The mine was a small drift opening, in which twenty to thirty men were employed. The accident occurred at noon on the 25th of April, while twenty men were in the mine. They had just re-entered after dinner and becoming alarmed at the grinding



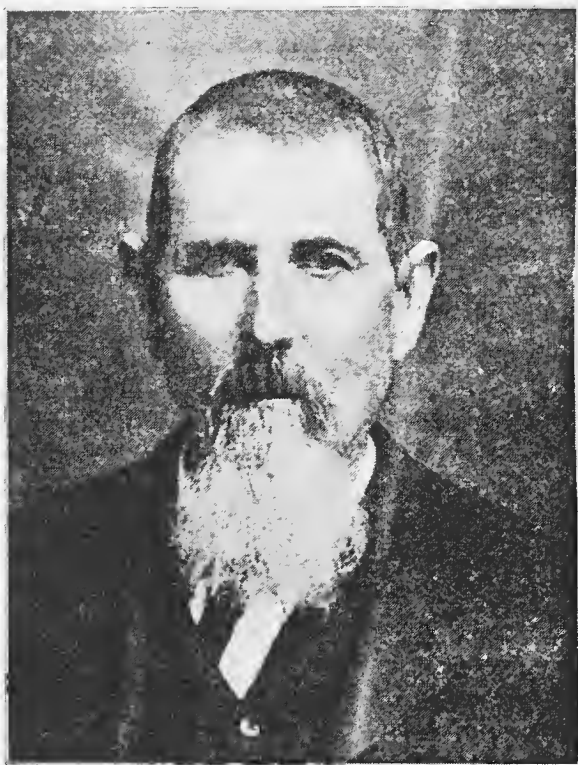
of the incumbent strata, and the bursting of the pillars, they fled in terror to the outer world. Four of their number named James Pierson, James Getwood, William Ellwood and Edward Savage, were caught in the crush and were hopelessly imprisoned.

As soon as it became known that four human beings were buried alive in a coal mine, thousands of people, from all parts of the State, flew to the scene of the disaster to offer assistance in the rescue of the forlorn miners. Work went on with extraordinary avidity to cut a passageway through the fallen masses of rock. Again and again the noble band of rescuers was driven back in dismay, work being resumed as soon as the roof settled. William Edwards, of Roseville, a miner of great skill and experience, assumed charge of the work of rescue, and wrought to the last moment without leaving his post.

Day after day the heroic miners worked with unabated energy after hope had gone except in the hearts of the faithful wives and parents of the entombed miners. On Tuesday of the second week, the rescuers had cut their way to an empty car, and expected to find the dead body of a miner beside it. On Thursday, one of the rescuers heard the sound of a human voice on the other side of the fall, and called the attention of his associates to the fact. Edwards put his ear to the ground and listened, and thought he heard the sound of voices as of men in conversation. He shouted through the rock, "Are you alive and well?" "We are all well," responded a voice from within, "but we have no lights in here." "We are doing all we can for you," cried the overjoyed Edwards. One of the rescuers ran outside and cried: "The men are all alive; we have heard them talking."

At 1 o'clock p. m. May 9th, fourteen days and thirteen hours after the accident, the four miners were brought out. Edward Savage, who was a boy 15 years of age, was the first recovered. He immediately asked for a quid of tobacco.

The faces of the rescued men were covered to protect their eyes from the light. They were borne to their homes on chairs, placed in dark rooms and fed on rice-water and soup. They soon began to gain strength. When allowed to



EDWARD SAVAGE.

look outside, the sight was in strange contrast with the view when they last saw the light of day; the trees which were then almost bare were now covered with leaves.

The history of William Edgell was quite remarkable. As soon as he got well he resumed work in the mines. When the Civil War burst upon the country, he enlisted in an Ohio regiment of infantry, and fought with the same heroism with which he confronted the masses of fallen strata in the gloomy labyrinth of the mine. After fighting in a dozen battles, one of his hands was shot away, and he was honorably discharged. He then resumed his former occupation, procuring an iron hook which he fastened on his arm in handling the pick, and could still do a good day's work in the mines. He was an industrious man, and with the savings of his wages, bought a farm on the Muskingum River, a few miles below Zanesville, and became a well-to-do farmer.

Edgell used to drive into Zanesville on a Saturday evening to pass an hour or two with his old comrades in arms, and fight the battles of the Rebellion over again. One winter evening, having been in town all day, he started home in his wagon, but thoughtlessly gave the horses a sharp cut with the whip. They made a sudden plunge forward which threw Edgell out of the wagon. He struck the ground with his head and broke his neck; and thus died the miner and patriot who had braved death in the mines and on the battlefield, as few men had ever done.

William Edwards, the Roseville miner, also went to the war. He rose to the rank of Major, and died gallantly on the field with his face to the enemy. Savage could not be induced for many years after the accident to return to the mines, but the horror wore off, and he again returned to his dangerous subterranean workshop. Getwood and Pierson also went back to the mines.

This was the first exciting mine catastrophe which occurred in the United States, and brought out these noble qualities of miners, who risk their own lives in the face of the most imminent danger to save the lives of imperilled fellow-workmen.

On the 16th of February, 1883, one of the most heart-rendering catastrophes in the annals of coal mining in the United States occurred at Mine No. 2 of the Diamond Coal Company, near the village of Braidwood, in the state of Illinois. The mine was a shaft opening, a hundred feet in depth. The coal, which was three feet thick, was worked on the long wall plan, the whole of the seam being removed as the workings progressed forward—the incumbent strata falling down behind the miners. In thin veins and where the conditions are favorable, this system of working coal is often preferred to pillar and room, and is a favorite plan in the Scottish collieries, in many parts of England and Wales, and it is also adopted in many mines in Illinois, Iowa, Kansas and other western states.

On two separate occasions before the occurrence of the dreadful accident, there had been slight indunations of water from breaks in the roof. Slight inundations are of frequent occurrence in long wall mining, but generally exhaust themselves in a few hours, and seldom overpower the pumps, and therefore cause little alarm to the subterranean workers.

For two days preceding the accident there had been heavy falls of snow. During the night of the 15th the weather moderated, the snow changing to rain. On the fatal morning of the 16th, the prairie overlying the underground workings was covered with water, the depressions in the land being several feet deep. Some of the more thoughtful miners did not relish the situation and remained at home, but the mass ridiculed the idea of danger with 100 feet of strata of clay, sandstone, soapstone and shale intervening between them and the overlying lake. Subterranean excavations are boldly pushed under the sea in England, and the author has been in a mine under the Ohio River, where the paddle wheel of the steamboats plying the river could be distinctly heard.

At 11 o'clock in the forenoon, the roof broke to the surface, 500 feet northeast of the hoisting shaft, in a dip or depression

of the strata, and the water rushed through the break in a mad current. The driver boys were the first to discover the flood. With a heroism never surpassed, they left their mules and ran into the working faces where the miners were employed, calling at the top of their voices: "The mine is being flooded with water; run for your lives." The miners communicated the alarming tidings from one room to another and made a rush toward the two openings.

A number of the old employes of the mine, who had been in two previous inundations, did not at first realize the full extent of the danger. Meantime the angry current was eating into the ground every moment, enlarging the break and increasing the current into a tumultuous torrent. Those who ran toward the hoisting shaft found the water up to the roof in a depression of the strata, preventing all means of reaching the bottom of the shaft. There was another depression in the road leading to the air shaft, and a few minutes later the mad torrents filled this dip to the roof also. The men in their fight for life, plunged into the flood and waded through to safety until the water rose to the roof, the last man wading through when the water was within six inches of the roof. Duncan Brown and William Smith were the last to get out alive.

A number who could have saved themselves, fearing that friends in distant parts of the mine might not have been informed of the flood, ran to notify them, and died in the attempt to save others. P. C. Redmont brought one son beyond the point of danger, and ran back to save another, but perished in the attempt. Several of the brave drivers offered up their lives to save others. Conrad Wall, Michael Daly, John Mayer and Robert Daly made a rush through the mine to alarm their comrades, and were drowned.

The news spread like wild-fire through the villages of Diamond, Coal City, Braidwood, Braceville and Gardiner, and soon a vast crowd assembled around the mine. The

wives and children of the entombed men were paralyzed with fear as they beheld the maddened torrent of water plunging into the mine. Brave men stood still, feeling how helpless all human effort would be to stem the Niagara of water rushing headlong into the mine.

The chasm was soon thirty feet wide, and in three hours the water rose to the surface and became as placid as the ocean in the midst of a profound calm. Sixty-one men and boys were still in the mine in one vast uncoffined grave. The heart-broken relatives lingered around the chasm in a state of uncontrollable grief, after all hope had fled, until darkness threw her mantle over the scene, when all retired to their desolate homes weeping for their loved ones, and refusing to be comforted.

The flood having completed its work of death and destruction, a consultation was held between the leading miners and mine officials of the ill-fated mine, at which it was resolved to pump out the water and recover the bodies of the entombed miners. A corps of workmen was organized into three shifts to build a levee around the chasm. The night was bitter cold — a keen blizzard blowing across the prairie; but the work of rescue was continued all night with unabated energy. Hay, the limbs of trees, barrels, and whatever could be improvised, were thrown into the break. A track was laid on which cars loaded with clay were hauled and dumped into the chasm, until it was filled to the surface and hermetically sealed. The work of filling the break was prosecuted with such energy that in four days the pumps were started. They were kept going day and night until the mine was pumped dry.

Willing and eager volunteers were on hand to go down into the mine to search for the bodies of the dead miners. The rescuers were divided into three reliefs, and the work of rescue kept up, without intermission, day and night. When the first shift descended they found the roadways, particularly in the dips, closed with the debris which had been washed

into the mine by the flood. There were also great falls of roof; and the bold and adventurous explorers had frequently to cut their way along the roads where it was supposed bodies would be found. The atmosphere was so foul from the vapors of the mine, and the odor from the bodies of the dead, that none but the younger and more robust could remain longer than a few hours at a time.

The workmen, lying flat on their faces, cut low passages, throwing the debris behind, which was removed in boxes by the rear workers. A space was excavated in this manner large enough for a man to crawl through. The first bodies were recovered on Saturday, six weeks and one day from the date of the catastrophe. Many were found lying on the gob, having taken refuge in the higher parts of the mine, fighting death to the last.

Wooden boxes were lowered into the mine, and on Sunday morning twenty-two bodies were sent up the shaft, and laid in two rows for inspection and identification. As the grief-stricken relatives gathered around to view the dead and claim husbands, sons and brothers, the scene was heart-rending beyond description. To add to its solemnity, all the corpses had become so changed in appearance, from having laid so long in the water, that it was difficult, and in several cases almost impossible, to identify them. In one instance two heart-broken widows claimed the same body as that of their husband. It required the kind office of the parson to convince one of the vehemently excited females that the body belonged to the other.

A week later six more bodies were recovered and turned over to the friends of the deceased. The work of rescue was kept up for several weeks longer, but no more of the dead could be found. After a consultation with the daring corps of rescuers and others interested it was reluctantly concluded that further search would be fruitless, and the three shifts were withdrawn from the ill-fated mine. The machinery,

and all the fixtures of value were removed, and the mine abandoned forever. The forty-one unrecovered dead sleep in the vast grave into which they descended that fatal morning, full of life and hope, unconscious that it was to be their last on earth.

The dreadful catastrophe moved the hearts of the people of Illinois as no previous accident had ever done. No sooner had the mine been abandoned than committees were organized to receive subscriptions for the relief of the widow and fatherless. Liberal donations came pouring in from all classes of people, and in a short time \$40,000 was subscribed. The State of Illinois gave \$10,000 more. The committee in charge of the money acted in line with the generosity of the public, and one hundred and fifty widows and orphans, made destitute by the accident, were placed beyond the reach of want. The disinterested labors of this committee elicited the commendation of the people of the State.

Fifteen years after this terrible calamity, the mine workers of the State of Illinois started a movement for the erection of a monument over the grave of their comrades who perished in the flooded mine—the idea having originated with the local of Coal City, near the scene of the catastrophe. On the 5th of September, 1898, the monument was unveiled in the presence of thousands assembled to witness the dedication of the marble shaft in honor of the noble sons of subterranean toil who perished in the flooded mine. Amidst the solemnities of religious ceremonies the venerable mother of P. C. Redmont,—the brave miner, who after saving one son, perished in the attempt to rescue another—approached the monument and formally unveiled the shaft.

A catastrophe of a similar character to that of the Diamond mine, occurred at the Nanticoke slope in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania on the 18th of December, 1885. The coal pitched at a high angle, and the breasts in the upper lift were driven to the top of the anticlinal. The incumbent strata



consisted of fragile shale, which in turn was overlaid by quicksand and clay. Early in the forenoon of the catastrophe the roof gave way near the face of the counter gangway on the summit of the anticlinal. A mad rush of sand, clay and water burst into the workings and startled the miners. Such



MONUMENT TO THE DEAD MINERS AT BRAIDWOOD, ILLINOIS.

was the force and fury of the flood that in less than an hour, the gangways were filled from floor to roof.

All the miners who were at work inside of the break, ran to the air-shaft and escaped with their lives; but twenty-six brave men became enveloped in the flood and were lost. Four men were at work in the lower lift; one of them with desperate determination, tore himself loose, and reached the outer world in safety. As he freed himself from the flood he looked back for a moment to encourage his comrades. They made heroic efforts to save themselves, but were overwhelmed and buried in the flood.

As soon as it became known that a calamity had overtaken the Nanticoke slope, all the workmen from the adjacent mines rushed to the rescue of their imperilled comrades. A corps of rescuers was organized, which proceeded to cut a passage four feet square through the usurping debris. The debris was removed in buckets, by a line of men, sixty in number. For four days and nights the work of rescue was pushed with unparalleled energy, and two hundred and fifty feet of tunneling had been completed, when a flood of sand and water rushed in anew and filled the whole excavation, driving the rescuers away, who barely escaped with their lives.

The company operating the mine now directed the mining engineer in charge to survey the uninjured parts of the workings in the hope of locating the site of the inundation where the entombed men were most likely to be found. The engineer declared, after the survey was completed, that the men were probably all dead; and that to recover the bodies the main gangway of the mine would have to be cleared the whole length of the filled-up space. A corps of men were put to work to reopen this gallery. The work was pushed with the utmost vigor until the following summer, and yet not a single body had been recovered. Another inundation was feared, still the bold and resolute rescuers continued to work and hope. Feeling that further search would lead to no

satisfactory results, and might cause the loss of the corps of dauntless men at work on the debris, the manager abandoned the hopeless undertaking.

The friends of the dead miners were, however, still unsatisfied, and insisted on the continuation of the work. Finding the company unwilling to proceed, suits at law were entered to compel the operators to renew the work of rescue. The court held that sufficient efforts had been made, and that nothing further ought to be asked of them. The twenty-six bodies of the dead miners were left in their deep and watery graves.

On the 25th of August, 1887, this mine was the scene of another accident by an inundation of water. Three hundred miners were at work at the time, but fortunately no lives were lost. The men were apprised of the danger in time to escape to the bottom of the shaft, although many of them were up to their armpits in water, and were drawn up to day on the cage, a score at a time. Ninety mules were drowned. The subterranean reservoir was formed in a worked-out portion of the colliery.

Another dreadful catastrophe caused by an inundation of water, which has become historic in the annals of American mining, occurred on the 4th of February, 1891, at Slope No. 1, of J. C. Hayden & Co., situate at Jeansville, Luzerne county, in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. The mine workings consisted of two lifts. One of the breasts of the lower lift broke through into an abandoned mine filled with water. The subterranean lake rushed into the lower lift in a wild tumultuous flood. The miners sought safety in flight, but their retreat was cut off before many of their number got out of the mine. The roaring torrent filled the gangway, and rose up the breasts, driving the terror-stricken men before it, making exit or entrance impossible.

A scene of indescribable horror and amazement took place around the ill-fated slope. As soon as the excitement

subsided, the pumps were run to their utmost capacity day and night; but the entombed miners were not all recovered for eighteen days after the terrible accident. Some of the forlorn miners had been drowned, others had died of starvation, having taken refuge in the higher workings which the water could not reach. On Monday, February 23rd, seventeen bodies had been recovered.

While the search was still going on, the exploring party was startled by hearing the miners' well known signal—the rapping of a pillar. The explorers listened in breathless attention. There was no mistaking that sound, it was made by imprisoned miners. The daring band of rescuers started for the place whence the signal of distress proceeded, but were overtaken by a column of black-damp, amidst which neither light nor life could exist. A temporary airway had to be constructed to sweep away the deadly gas and renew the circulation. Some of the rescuers went up the slope to convey the glad tidings that several of the imprisoned men were still alive. The news produced the greatest excitement and soon spread all over the district. Thousands of people from the surrounding villages hastened to the mine to discuss the marvelous story, and witness the rescue of the hapless prisoners. A number of physicians volunteered their services and went into the mine, taking necessary nourishment with them, to superintend the manner of bringing out the prisoners, whose lives hung on a thread.

Meantime the daring rescuers, headed by the mine superintendent, had displaced the column of black-damp, and were at work cutting a hole through the pillar. At four o'clock Tuesday morning the men were reached and rescued. They were utterly exhausted, and could not have lived much longer. They were carefully wrapped in blankets, carried out of the mine on stretchers, and placed in dark rooms.

The four men had been eighteen days underground. For some days they had eaten very sparingly of the dinner they

had taken in the mine on the morning of their imprisonment. When this food was exhausted, they drank oil and ate rats, which like themselves had sought safety from the flood in the higher workings. The prisoners suffered from cold, and rubbed themselves against each other to restore warmth. The stronger of the four was known as "Big Joe," and he it was who kept knocking on the pillar in the hope of attracting the attention of the rescuers. All four, by careful nursing and medical attendance, recovered.

Fire-damp, that terrible scourge of coal mines, was seldom met in alarming volume by the first mine workers in this country. The earlier developments in both the anthracite and bituminous fields, were either by drift openings, or by comparatively shallow shafts, from which the inflammable air had generally been liberated ages ago, through the outcrop made by erosions of the coal strata. In the anthracite regions of Pennsylvania the theory was advanced by geologists that the fire-damp had been driven out of the coal by the heat which drove out the bituminous matter during the uplift of the Allegheny mountains, but when deep mining became necessary, this theory was proven to be a mistaken one.

During the last fifteen or twenty years, the loss of life by explosion has been greater in this country than in any other country in the world. Scarcely a month now passes that does not witness some catastrophe which throws whole neighborhoods into mourning. And all this in States which have mining codes, bristling with penalties, for the protection of the health and safety of miners, and State mine inspectors whose sworn duty is to see that those laws are enforced and obeyed.

No mine in the United States gives off fire-damp so copiously that it cannot be diluted and rendered harmless by the distribution of fresh air. Plans look well on paper, but too often theory and practice are not in accord. Fire-damp, like Satan, goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom it

may devour, and comes like a thief in the night. When once seen in a mine, its absence can never be trusted afterwards. Eternal vigilance is the price of safety.

In a drift mine in Columbiana county, Ohio, a case in point came under the author's observation in 1881. A little gas was occasionally met in two of the entries. The mine was a small one, working not more than twenty-five men. One morning, the boss, who acted as fire-viewer, found thirty-five yards of gas in entry No. 2 and thirty yards in No. 3. He could not write, but put up a danger signal in front of the entries and went out to breakfast without notifying any of the miners of the presence of gas. They went to work as usual, stepping over the piece of rail, not knowing what it meant, and supposing it had been left there by accident. A terrific explosion occurred which killed six men and seriously bruised or burned nine others. Such was the force of the blast, that a driver, three mules, a dog, and seven loaded cars, were blown out of the mouth of the drift. Two of the mules and the dog were instantly killed, but the driver, who was blown across the railroad track, landed on soft ground and was not seriously hurt.

The anthracite region of Pennsylvania, as the mine inspectors' reports show, is more dangerous and fatal to life than any other coal region in the world. Explosions of fire-damp and other mining calamities began to startle the public as soon as the mines were pushed down into the synclinals which traverse the field. Scarcely a week passes which does not witness one or more of these "accidents." A few of the more thrilling are here recorded, which occurred during the first three months of the year 1890.

At the Nottingham shaft near Plymouth, an explosion occurred on the first of February which killed six men, and seriously injured seven others. The men were engaged in timbering when the fire-damp exploded. The whole force was enveloped in the rolling volume of burning air, and such

was the power of the concussion, that stoppings were blown out and mine cars dashed to pieces. The engineer who attended the fan on top of the airshaft, was blown through the door of the fan house. One of the miners, after being scorched by the fire-damp, was able to regain his feet. He was kneeling in prayer when death relieved his sufferings.

A few weeks later, at shaft No. 3, of the South Wilkesbarre mine, located on Rolling Mill Hill, eight miners were killed. The mine took fire at four o'clock in the afternoon. The cause of the fire is still a mystery. A volume of smoke was seen rising from the shaft. Hundreds of miners gathered around the mouth of the pit, and soon a corps of rescuers was organized. On entering the mine, they found the gang-ways and air-passages filled with smoke and fire beyond which it was impossible to reach the imprisoned men who were at work in the interior of the mine more than three thousand feet beyond the burning pillars, all unconscious of their impending fate. A boy ran through the smoke and burning fire to notify the men, and died in his heroic attempt to save them. All the other inmates of the mine who were not on the line of the smoke and fire, escaped to an adjoining mine, whose workings were holed through into mine number 3.

The mothers and wives of the imprisoned miners flew to the scene, wringing their hands, and filling the air with uncontrollable grief. There was no leadership among the assembled multitude for a time, and several hours of valuable time were lost before an organization was perfected. At ten o'clock a corps of rescuers, headed by the mine superintendent, the mining engineer and mine inspector of the district, descended the adjoining shaft, and penetrated several thousand feet beyond the burning pillar of coal. After a search of six hours' duration, the rescuers returned to day without locating the imprisoned men. The following morning a second party explored the mine; but their search was equally fruitless. The general opinion was that the men were

all dead, as they could not be found at any point where human life could exist.

The managers now concluded to submerge the workings as the only means of extinguishing the fire, which was gathering force every minute. Thirteen streams of water were turned into the shaft until the fire was extinguished. The pumps were then started, and kept going day and night until the workings were pumped dry.

It was not until the 31st of December, ten months after the fatal catastrophe, that the mine was reopened and the bodies of the dead miners recovered. They were all found together, in a far gone state of decomposition. They were identified by the fragments of their clothing, rather than by their faces. One of them, who had lost a limb in a previous catastrophe, was readily recognized by his wooden leg. The remains were rolled up in blankets, placed on stretchers, sent out to day, and buried with imposing ceremony.

On May 16th of the same year, a third catastrophe occurred in this coal region, at the Jersey colliery of the Wilkesbarre Coal Company, by which nineteen miners lost their lives. This accident was caused by a crush of the incumbent strata which spread a volume of standing gas through the upper lift where the people of that division of the mine were at work. The gas was kindled from the naked light of the fire boss. It caused a terrific explosion, the burning fire-damp rolling in a vast sheet through the working places of the miners.

The fall of the incumbent rocks had closed the avenues which led to the first lift, making it impossible for a rescuing corps to reach the terribly scorched men, and a surface shaft had to be sunk to get into this division of the workings. The steep inclination of the vein, however, had brought the advanced rooms to the alluvial cover of the coal, and, in a single day, an energetic corps of sinkers completed a small shaft, through which a rescuing party descended.



At six o'clock, three were found alive, and soon three more were rescued and sent out to their friends. They were insensible from the effects of the after-damp, but soon recovered in the sweet air of heaven. The heroic rescuers continued their search amidst the mephitic vapors of the mine until the force of nature could no further go, when they returned to day to rest and recuperate.

Before the search was renewed, it was necessary to renew the circulation and discharge the after-damp. Early the following morning a rescuing party again descended. The explorers were able to reach the scene of the explosion, and found the missing men, nineteen in number, stretched in death. A number of them were burned in an extraordinary manner, their clothing being scorched, and their arms and bodies charred. Most of them had covered their faces with their hands, which miners are taught to do who work in fire-damp mines. One of the dead, a man of gigantic frame, had been blown against the side of the gangway and dashed to pieces. His mutilated remains were gathered together, and sent out in a rough wooden box.

By far the greater number of fatalities result from falls of coal and roof. These accidents the public hear little about, but their aggregate each year runs up into hundreds of deaths. The same is true in a less degree of the bituminous mines of the country.

Another cause of fatality which is less known even than accidents by falls of roof and coal, is the mephitic vapors, which the miner, whenever defective ventilation exists, is obliged to breathe in his subterranean workshop. These gases kill the men by inches, being insidious in their operation, and are a fruitful cause of the discontent and spirit of fault-finding, which so often characterize miners, and have been the indirect cause of many a long and bitter strike.

Prior to the year 1884, explosions of fire-damp in the soft coal mines in the United States were generally feeble in

character, resulting in few fatalities, and small destruction to mining property, but in 1884, a series of explosions occurred, resembling those terrible calamities of British coal mines. which shocked the civilized world. Every year since 1884 has added to their frequency and destructive force.

The first of the series occurred in the new state of Colorado, at the Crested Butte mine, in Gunnison county. This catastrophe happened on the 24th of January, 1884. The mine, although comparatively new, was quite an extensive one, employing nearly two hundred miners. Half an hour after the day shift, consisting of sixty-seven men, had gone to work, a terrible roar resembling thunder was heard in the mine, which was immediately followed by vast clouds of dust and debris issuing from the pit's mouth. The main entry was filled with the wreck; the roof of the dump house was blown away; the stoppings in the air-ways were thrown down.

The scenes which occurred around the mine were heart-rending in the extreme. The wives, mothers and sisters of the entombed miners gathered around the entrance of the mine weeping and wringing their hands.

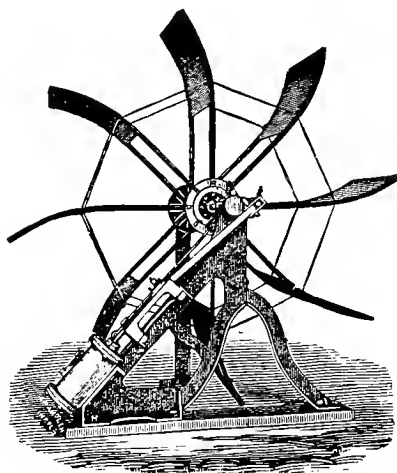
A corps of rescuers was soon organized to explore the mine for the recovery of the dead, and to search for the living. Eight men were all that were recovered alive, the other fifty-nine having been scorched to death by the burning air or poisoned by the deadly after-damp.

The Crested Butte mine gave off fire-damp copiously, but it was well ventilated, and the explosion startled the manager like a clap of thunder in a cloudless sky. A fire-boss was employed who made the rounds of the mine daily before any of the miners were allowed to enter. But fire-bosses become careless, and this one must have been especially so on this fatal morning. The night preceding the explosion, the brattice cloth in the division of the mine where the catastrophe occurred, had become defective, permitting a dan-

gerous accumulation of gas, which exploded from a naked light, and wrought death to the miners and destruction to the mine. The mine superintendent was disposed to blame the carelessness of a miner going into a room where he had forbidden. This is the ever-ready excuse in mine explosions, for dead men tell no tales.

On the 20th of February, of the same year, another explosion took place in the West Leisening mine, in the Connellsville region of Pennsylvania, which killed nineteen men. The fire-damp accumulated during the night, and exploded from the naked light of one of the workmen.

Three weeks later one of the most appalling explosions that had hitherto occurred in the annals of coal mining, in the United States, took place in the new coal field of the Flat Top region of Virginia, which killed the whole population of the mine.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE POCAHONTAS EXPLOSION  
on 10th May 1891

**T**HE Pocahontas mine was a drift coal-field opening, considered by the officers in charge to be not only free from the presence of fire-damp, but even from the possibility of generating gas. When, therefore, the explosion occurred, the superintendent insisted that fine coal dust, held in the air of the mine by mechanical suspension, had exploded and produced the catastrophe.

Shortly after the accident, the Southwest Virginia Improvement Company, which owned and operated the mine, requested the president of the American Institute of Mining Engineers to appoint a committee of expert members to investigate the cause of the explosion. The committee consisted of three members of the American Institute, who made a thorough examination of the mine before operations were resumed. They were not satisfied as to the cause of the explosion, finding no trace of fire-damp in the workings, and while not certain whether the mine made fire-damp or not, concluded, after stating the conditions which led to the catastrophe, "that the explosion was due either to coal dust alone, or to coal dust quickened by an admixture of fire-damp too slight for detection by ordinary means." The report of this committee was read before the Chicago meeting of the American Institute of Mining Engineers held in May, 1884, and forms part of the transactions of the Institute.

The author visited the mine and examined the workings several times during a ten days' sojourn in Tazewell county. The coal is of sub-conglomerate age, belonging to the series of sub-conglomerate coals found along the southeastern out-

crops of the great Appalachian Coal Field. This seam is known as number three of the series, and lies about 100 feet above the upper surface of the Brown Shale. The coal ranges from nine to eleven feet in thickness and is semi-bituminous in character, resembling the coal of the Frostburg, Maryland field. Only eight feet of the bed is mined in working forward, two feet or more of top coal being left unwrought to form the roof of the mine.

The mine, which was opened in the fall of 1881, had not been worked over an area of more than 20 acres when the explosion occurred, about 200,000 tons of coal had been mined. With the exception of a few rooms on the first and second west entries, none of the working places of the mine had been finished up. On the second west, pillars were being drawn in the first ten rooms.

There were five separate openings to the mine, two on the east and two on the west of the main gallery. The east opening was the intake, and the extreme west the upcast. Ventilation was produced by an eight-foot Murphy fan, capable of moving 75,000 cubic feet of air per minute. The ventilating current first traversed the southern division of the first east entry, thence returning by the northern division to the third north of the first east, and was sent up the east side of this entry and brought back along the west parallel. On reaching the second east there was a direct course opened for the air to return down to the main north entry, so that all the workings of the second and third east entries were deprived of the greater portion of the air designed for this division of the mine. This part of the workings, which was known as "Hell's Half Acre," consisted of thirty-three working places, besides the entries, and was the worst ventilated division of the mine.

In addition to the defective plan of ventilating in "Hell's Half Acre," there was gross negligence in regard to keeping the trap doors of the mine shut.

For some days before, as well as at the time of the explosion, the doors for guiding and directing the main current of air were propped wide open, so that the column of air which entered the mine, instead of being forced forward to the interior, where the miners were at work, passed directly to the fan entry and was delivered to day. The air in the workings was thick and rapid in consequence.

For several months before the explosion occurred, there were frequent warnings that the mine was generating an explosive compound. In January, 1883, a slight explosion occurred on the first east entry—the gas having kindled from a shot. The flame of the burning air rolled along the roof of this entry for a hundred feet, raising a cloud of dust and alarming the miners who were mainly foreigners and negroes who had never seen inflamed air in a mine.

During the fall of 1883, George Brittan was severely burned by an explosion. The gas, which kindled from a shot, rolled in a flame through the breakthrough in which he stood, thirtyfive feet from the face of the room. Two Hungarian miners after firing a shot, went outside, and, on returning to their room an hour afterwards, the inflammable air caught fire from one of their lamps.

The great explosion occurred at half-past one o'clock in the morning, the night shift having been at work for over six hours. At the time of the accident, the weather was soft and wet, and had been so for some days, indicating a low barometer. There were five distinct explosions, within two or three minutes. Each blast shook the earth and was louder than the most terrific thunderbolt.

When the author examined the mine, the lines of direction of the rolling volumes of burning air could still be seen. The roof and pillars were charred by the intense heat of the inflamed atmosphere. The first explosion, which evidently originated at or near the head of the workings in "Hell's Half Acre," in the worst ventilated part of the mine, split in

two columns, one stream of flame rolling southward through the working places in "Hell's Half Acre," and the other rolling westward along the third east entry. At the second east at the foot of "Hell's Half Acre," the flame again divided, one column flying through the second east, and the other traveling to and along the first east to the third north, the lurid flames rolling from roof to pavement, scorching to death every living thing within their reach. On the west side of the main north entry, few if any, of the miners were burned, as the flames did not penetrate this part of the mine.

At one point, near the face of the second north of the third west, seventeen colored men were found dead in a heap, from the effects of the after-damp. They had heard the noise of the blast, and evidently had all run in terror, doubtless feeling that the Angel Gabriel had come and blown the last trumpet. Had they run outside on hearing the explosion every one of them would have been saved. In this part of the mine, a Hungarian was found dead, with his pick in his hand. Others were lying flat on the floor, with their faces downward and their arms stretched out as though they had fallen while running.

No effort was made after the explosion for the rescue of those who escaped the burning air. The mine boss, losing all self-control, retired to his bed from which he did not rise for two weeks.

The pillars caught fire from the burning air and a few days after the explosion, the mine was, by the advice of an experienced mining engineer from Midlothian, near Richmond, hermetically sealed and flooded with water. Four weeks elapsed before the workings were re-entered and the bodies of the dead miners recovered. Not a trace of inflammable gas was found in the workings.

The Pocahontas catastrophe was the first case in the history of American coal mining in which the coal dust theory was advanced to account for an explosion. This subject had,

however, been discussed in England and on the Continent for several years by the ablest living mining engineers, by mining institutes and by government commissions. As early as 1845, Messrs. Lyell and Farrady called attention to the fact that fire-damp is not the only force in colliery explosions where fine dry coal dust existed in copious volumes. In France, M. M. Sorich in 1855; Vital and Touraeni, in 1875, as well as other French mining engineers, made experiments with the fine dry coal dust of mines to determine its influence in explosions. An elaborate series of experiments, the most thorough ever undertaken in England, were made with coal dust by a committee of the Chesterfield and Derbyshire Institute of Mining Engineers in 1879. This committee, as a result of its experiments, came to the unanimous conclusion that while coal dust can be inflamed, under specially arranged conditions, no explosion, only ignition of the dust, results, unless fire-damp is present in the air, and that the finest, freshest, and most highly inflammable coal dust floating in the air of mines in which no fire-damp is present, can not be ignited by any direct action of a blown-out shot. In air, however, charged with a percentage of fire-damp, as low as from one-half to three per cent., which can not be detected by an ordinary safety lamp, the indications are that a heavily charged blown-out shot might raise a cloud of dust which would form an explosive compound.

The researches of Mr. W. Galloway, government inspector of mines, on the influence of coal dust in colliery explosions, published in the proceedings of the Royal Society, attracted the earnest attention of mining engineers in every coal-producing country in the world. Mr. Galloway's early experiments showed that coal dust was not inflammable at ordinary pressure and temperature, but that a mixture of gas in the proportion of one volume of fire-damp to one hundred and twelve of air would cause explosion. In a subsequent communication to the Royal Society, read in June, 1881,



after describing a new series of experiments on a larger scale than those formerly made, he states that the flame of coal dust appears to be self-supporting in pure air, but can not get much beyond the point to which the more energetic action of the fire-damp explosion has extended. In his fourth paper, read before the Royal Society in May, 1884, Mr. Galloway states that since his former papers on the subject were read, he had investigated the cause of several great accidents, and is of the opinion that coal dust alone is capable of producing as fatal and destructive catastrophies as the most violent fire-damp explosions; that fire-damp is not necessary in any quantity to cause explosion in a dry and dusty mine—a shot which blows out its tamping, raising and inflaming a cloud of dust, being in his judgment sufficient. Shots of this kind, he insists, have been the cause of great explosions in the mines of England, in which there could be nothing but pure air.

The governments of Great Britain, France and Prussia each created special commissions to inquire into the cause of mining accidents, which made coal dust, and its influence in colliery explosions, the subject of searching investigation.

The French commission ascertained that the tendency of coal dust to explode, depends upon the amount of volatile matter in the coal, that the quantity of fine dust, required to be mixed with the air of mines to cause explosion, can only be raised by violent mechanical action; that the ignition of dust can be caused only by very strong flames; that flame is transmitted very slowly in air loaded with dust. The commission concluded that coal dust alone could only give rise to local explosions of very limited extent.

The English commission presented a preliminary report in 1881. The report is brief, but the evidence very voluminous. The most experienced, practical miners of the United Kingdom were almost unanimous in the opinion that coal dust itself is not inflammable to any serious extent, and no

instances had ever come under their observation of explosion being caused by coal dust alone. At the same time the majority concurred in the view that while coal dust could not itself cause explosion, it did intensify the power and extent of the blast.

Experiments made by the German Fire-Damp Commission on the other hand, favor the researches of Mr. Galloway. At the request of one of the members of the German commission, the scientific technical committee of the commission made a series of experiments in October, 1884, under circumstances more closely resembling actual mining conditions than any that had previously been undertaken. A number of small cast-iron mortar guns, whose bore holes were no larger than the ordinary drill-hole of a miner, were taken into an old stone drift, 167 feet in length. The guns, which were protected by a heavy block of masonry, were fired by electricity, the result being watched through small, but thick glass windows inserted in cast-iron frames. The guns were charged with eight inches of powder, making a cartridge one foot in length. They were then tamped with clay or fine coal, nineteen and a half inches. The length of flame of a gun tamped with clay was ten feet, with small coal tamping, twenty-six feet. The floor was then covered for 131 feet in length, with a layer of fine coal dust of poor quality to a depth of one and a half inches. A gun fired with clay tamping produced a flame 18 feet in length; with small coal dust tamping the flame increased to 31 feet. When coal dust was laid on the floor, from the Pluto mine, Westphalia, which had been the scene of several fire-damp catastrophies, explosion followed the discharge of the gun, the flame extending the length of 190 feet — 23 feet beyond the mouth of the drift.

Experiments with fire-damp were also made, the gas having been taken from a mine three hundred and ninety-four feet below the surface. Five per cent. of gas, mixed with air,

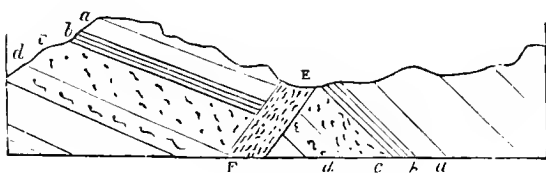
produced a flame thirty-six feet long. A layer of coal dust, taken from the Pluto mine, was then sprinkled on the floor for sixty-five feet. A loud explosion followed the firing of the gun, and the flame reached out a hundred and seventy-one feet.

On the 14th of February, 1885, the author sent samples of the dust of the Pocahontas mine, and dust from every mining district of Ohio, to Prof. N. W. Lord, of the School of Mines in the State University of Ohio. Prof. Lord made a series of experiments with these coal dusts. The apparatus used was a pipe seven inches in diameter and two and one-half feet long, set on end, air holes being made at the bottom. A light was kept burning at the bottom of the pipe, which raised the temperature of the air to 120 degrees, Fahrenheit. Pulverized coal dust from the Coshocton coal in Coshocton county, Ohio, which contains from 40% to 44% of volatile combustible matter, was placed in a sieve containing 80 apertures to the square inch, and shaken over the pipe, the dust falling in a thick cloud upon the light. It immediately inflamed and filled the pipe.

The experiment was then made with the dust from the Pocahontas mine, taken from near the place where the explosion originated, but flame could not be produced. A dozen trials were made, and though the light in the pipe became greatly lengthened in every experiment, giving off rapid and continuous sparks, in no case did the coal dust inflame. Common street gas was then mixed with the air in the pipe, there being no fire-damp on hand. After several explosions of air and gas had been caused, the amount of gas was reduced in volume just below an explosive compound. When dust from the Pocahontas mine was added, an explosion immediately resulted, and the same result followed when dust from the Jackson county, Ohio, mine was introduced. The Jackson county coal is lower in volatile matter than that of Coshocton county. The Pocahontas coal,

being a semi-bituminous variety, contains less than twenty per cent. of volatile matter. The results of the experiments made by Prof. Lord are in harmony with those made in England and the Continent. Mr. Galloway, the most enthusiastic advocate of the coal dust theory of explosion, says that the chemical composition of the coal from which the dust comes, has everything to do with its ability to explode.

In recent years the theory that any coal dust will explode without a mixture of fire-damp in the air has been thoughtlessly accepted by mine managers in the United States, and is now generally accounted for as causing explosions in coal mines.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE HOCKING VALLEY STRIKE OF 1884.

THE Hocking Valley coal field of Ohio extends through portions of the counties of Hocking, Athens and Perry, and at the time of this strike was the most important mining district in the State. The seam of coal in active development is No. 6 of the state geological nomenclature, ranging from five to ten and twelve feet in thickness; but where the vein rises above six feet, part of the upper bench frequently becomes too impure for commercial purposes, and is either left unwrought in the mine or sorted out in loading and thrown back in the gob. Active developments began in 1872 with the completion of the branch road of the Hocking Valley railway from Logan to New Straitsville, and the branch of the Baltimore and Ohio from Newark to Shawnee. Prior to this time, several companies were operating at Nelsonville and Haydenville, shipments being made by canal and by the Hocking Valley railroad.

The district had become proverbial for its quarrels and strikes. New Straitsville and Shawnee possessed coal ten feet in height, while the mines at Nelsonville and Haydenville, held only six feet. The operators of the thick coal thought that the miners ought to work for ten cents per ton less than those who worked in the thinner mines. The thick coal miners declined to do so and were encouraged in their position by both the miners and the operators of the six-foot district. The thick coal mines were generally overcrowded with miners, who flocked there on account of its height, and found ready employment, as most of the operators owned

stores and gave employment to a surplus of miners for the sake of the store trade, which was very profitable.

The miners had abundant leisure, and as Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do, they employed their idle time in the discussion of real or imaginary grievances. The more a matter is discussed, the more important it becomes. The mine committees, which were established at every mine in the valley, called meetings during working hours on frivolous matters, and sometimes as many as three strikes were inaugurated in a single day. The patience of the operators was put to the utmost test, and they seized every favorable opportunity to revenge themselves on their fault-finding and obstreperous workmen.

A number of great strikes had occurred in the valley over wage disputes, the miners on all such occasions opposing a determined front to every proposed cut in their wages, and were able by the power of firm union and the splendid fighting qualities so characteristic of the district, to hold their own in many conflicts. They were frequently defeated, but their organization was never destroyed, and they came out of every contest, undismayed by disaster, and ready to deliver or accept battle again on the slightest provocation.

In the spring of 1883, all the mines in the Valley were consolidated into two companies, known as the Ohio Coal Exchange, and the Columbus and Hocking Valley Coal and Iron Company. This latter company was generally called the Syndicate. Both companies worked in harmony and started business with the settled purpose of freeing themselves from the power of the miners' union. The miners, who saw in this combination a menace to their organization, looked upon it with unconcealed hatred and hostility, and made ready for the impending conflict.

The coal trade of the country was greatly depressed in 1884 and the syndicate made several unsuccessful attempts to induce the miners to accept a reduction of wages from 70

to 60 cents per ton, with a corresponding reduction of other mining labor. Such a reduction, it was believed, would enable the syndicate to cut the market, take the trade from competing fields, and give the miners steady employment. The mine superintendents labored with the mining leaders to accept the proposed reduction so as to secure steady work, but they turned a deaf ear to all such appeals, knowing from past experience that a cut of wages in the Valley would be followed by a similar cut in every competing field, and pave the way for another reduction. Finding the miners unwilling to accept a reduction, and believing that they were not in condition to engage in a long strike, the syndicate posted up notices at the mines to the effect that on and after June 23, 1884, the rate of mining would be reduced to 60 cents per ton, and other labor in proportion. The miners peremptorily declined to accept the proposed cut and came out on strike.

After the strike had lasted two or three weeks, the syndicate took down the notices for the ten cent cut, and replaced them with others stating that the reduction would now be twenty cents per ton instead of ten, and that none of the strikers would be allowed to resume work until they had first signed a contract to work for such wages for one year, and agree not to join in any strike, nor belong to any miners' union for the purpose of raising wages; nor aid, abet or countenance any strike or combination or scheme for any purpose whatever, under the penalty of immediate discharge and forfeiture of all pay due at the time. A number of special rules were also drawn up for the regulation of work and other matters which the strikers were required to sign as a condition of resuming work, one of which forbid any employe from attending any meeting during working hours, either above or below ground.

The anger of the strikers knew no bounds on reading these contracts and rules. The leaders at once prepared for a desperate and enduring struggle. There were forty-six

mines thrown idle and more than 3,000 miners on strike. The great majority of the strikers, owing to the dull work of the preceding year, possessed neither money nor credit to carry themselves and families through any prolonged suspension. These needy families must be supported if the strike was to continue. The leaders at once organized committees of appeal, who were sent out among the surrounding farmers and to distant mining districts, to solicit aid. Money and provisions came pouring in from every quarter; many operators in other fields contributing liberally, feeling that the action of the syndicate in making such a sweeping cut in wages, and following it up with so hard and exacting a contract, was outraging the American spirit of fair play.

Meantime the mine owners were not idle. They sent agents to the south to engage negro miners, and to the east to hire immigrants whose manners, language and looks were strange, and in a few weeks a heterogeneous mass of Negroes, Italians, Slavs and other foreigners were dumped at the mines and distributed among the various companies of the Valley. A large force of heavily armed Pinkerton detectives accompanied the needy adventurers, who were quartered in barracks improvised for the purpose—port holes being left in the barracks for the Pinkies to shoot through. Dead lines were established, beyond which no striker was permitted to pass, and orders given to shoot every man, who on being halted, refused to turn back. In addition, a company of militia was sent to the Valley by the governor of the State on the requisition of the sheriff of Perry county.

The miners saw all this, but never weakened. A general commissary was established at New Straitsville; branches were organized at Nelsonville, Buchtel, Shawnee and other points; relief committees were formed at every mine to visit the needy families and supply their wants. Those of the strikers who had property, or money, or credit declined to accept alimnt, and with a generosity above all praise, directed



that their part of the contributions be turned over to the support of the poor and needy.

The summer passed away into fall; the fall into winter; the winter into spring, and still there was no sign of yielding on the part of the determined strikers. Although liberal contributions in the shape of provisions, clothing and money came pouring in week after week, and month after month, there was much want and suffering in the Valley during the later months of the strike. Men without shoes waded through the frost and snow to the commissary; children subsisted on apples for days at a time; corn was grated on empty fruit cans, and baked into bread, and still the strikers had their colors nailed to the mast.

The great strike bore with unparalleled severity on all the companies composing the syndicate, as well as on the miners. Although a thousand or more men had been brought into the mines to break up the strike, many of them left as soon as they learned the true situation of affairs. Their expenses had been paid by the syndicate; the agents who went after them were paid large salaries; the guards who protected them were paid better wages than they could have earned at any handicraft they ever worked. One or two of the mines were set on fire, which burned for several months and did great damage. The coal output was so meager that money was sunk every month, and the market could not be supplied according to contract. Mr. John R. Buchtel, the president of the Syndicate, one of the noblest of men — warm-hearted, liberal-minded, honest and honorable to a fault, who had never done a wrong thing as an individual employer, was overwhelmed with sorrow, and was finally stricken with paralysis as a result of the obstinate trade dispute.

At the session of the General Assembly of the State, which convened in January, 1885, a joint resolution was passed, providing for the appointment of a committee of that body to investigate the cause of the strike, and also to inquire as

to what legislation, if any, was needed to prevent strikes in the future. A vast amount of valuable testimony was taken by this committee, the witnesses being allowed the fullest opportunity to testify on all matters relating to the cause of strikes. The miners who testified, complained of the truck system as a disturbing element, and stated that the syndicate owned and operated company stores at every mine, and used a mild system of coercion to compel their employes to deal in these stores. Checks and orders were given, and miners were discriminated against who declined to patronize the company store. One of the witnesses submitted a statement from the Annual Report of the State Labor Commissioner to show that the prices charged for goods were much higher than obtained in neighboring cash stores. The following is the statement submitted:

Coffee, per pound, company's store.....	\$0 20
Do. cash store .....	18
Tea, per pound, company's store.....	91½
Do. cash store.....	70½
Sugar, per pound, company's store.....	12
Do. cash store.....	11
Ham, per pound, company's store.....	18¾
Do. cash store.....	17½
Bacon, per pound, company's store.....	18
Do. cash store.....	16⅔
Flour, per barrel, company's store.....	8 64
Do. cash store.....	6 04
Canned goods, per can, company's store.....	18
Do. cash store.....	13
Men's boots, per pair, company's store.....	4 46
Do. cash store.....	3 67
Boy's boots, per pair, company's store.....	2 45
Do. cash store.....	1 80
Women's shoes, per pair, company's store.....	2 90
Do. cash store.....	2 45

Children's shoes, per pair, company's store.....	1	21
Do. cash store.....		93
Calico, per yard, company's store.....		11
Do. cash store.....		9
Flannels, per yard, company's store.....		49
Do. cash store.....		44
Powder, per keg, company's store.....	3	66
Do. cash store.....	3	13
Oil, per gallon, company's store.....		97
Do. cash store.....		78

In selling goods to their employes, no money exchanged hands. The company issued checks of various denominations, ranging in value from two cents to five dollars, redeemable in merchandise at the company's store. These checks were issued after the amount called for was earned. The profits on the stores, it was claimed, was sometimes greater than those of the mines. This was the truck system. The following are the kind of checks used by the Syndicate in the Hocking Valley.

\$1.00. Non-negotiable and redeemable only on conditions specified.	GOOD FOR <b>ONE DOLLAR</b> IN MERCHANDISE AT STORE 20.
	<hr/> GOOD ONLY TO AN EMPLOYE ON ACCOUNT OF LABOR PERFORMED.
	<hr/> THE COLUMBUS & HOCKING COAL & IRON CO.
	Per .....

50 Cts. Non-negotiable and redeemable only on conditions specified.	GOOD FOR <b>FIFTY CENTS</b> IN MERCHANDISE AT <b>STORE 20.</b>
<hr/> GOOD ONLY TO AN EMPLOYE ON ACCOUNT OF LABOR PERFORMED.	
<hr/> <b>THE COLUMBUS &amp; HOCKING COAL &amp; IRON CO.</b> Per .....	

25 Cts. Non-negotiable and redeemable only on conditions specified.	GOOD FOR <b>TWENTY-FIVE CENTS</b> IN MERCHANDISE AT <b>STORE 20.</b>
<hr/> GOOD ONLY TO AN EMPLOYE ON ACCOUNT OF LABOR PERFORMED.	
<hr/> <b>THE COLUMBUS &amp; HOCKING COAL &amp; IRON CO.</b> Per ...	

10 Cts. Non-negotiable and redeemable only on conditions specified.	GOOD FOR <b>TEN CENTS</b> IN MERCHANDISE AT <b>STORE 20.</b>
<hr/> GOOD ONLY TO AN EMPLOYE ON ACCOUNT OF LABOR PERFORMED.	
<hr/> <b>THE COLUMBUS &amp; HOCKING COAL &amp; IRON CO.</b> Per .....	

W. P. Rend, an extensive operator in the Hocking Valley, whose testimony was in favor of the miners, said in regard to company stores: "It would be advisable for parties having mine stores to give up that branch of the business, and let merchants and others carry it on, as it is a constant cause of discontent and outcry on the part of the miners. Whether justly or not, the complaint is made on the part of



W. P. REND.

the miners that they are made to pay extortionate prices, and that petty acts of tyranny are employed to coerce the men to deal out their earnings in the store belonging to their employers. These complaints are often-times unjust; but it is evident that where employers are allowed such great

power, they will abuse that power and will often, doubtless resort to despicable and tyrannical means for the purpose of increasing their gains. If company stores were eliminated from the business, it would be, in my opinion, a blessing to the miners, and certainly a great benefit to those operators who have no store. As an operator, I will say that at times I find it virtually impossible to run my mines when there is close competition, and maintain trade against parties who have stores. They sell coal at a price which it costs to produce it, and take their profit out of the store, which is generally a large one. As an operator I would like to see stores abolished. It would be better to have it done by the operators themselves. Whether the Legislature can reach it or not, depends upon the Legislature of course.'

All the operators who kept stores, testified that they kept them for the accommodation of their employes and for no other reason, and that they sold goods as cheap as other stores in the neighborhood.

Prior to the appointment of the Legislative committee, a bill had been introduced in the General Assembly for the abolition of the truck system, which was enacted into a law after the investigation began; and it was hoped that this fruitful source of discontent had at last been eliminated from the business of coal mining. Many of the operators, however, found means of evading both the letter and spirit of the act. They took a partner in the store who had no interest in the mine, and operated the store and mine as separate companies. The profits accruing from the truck system were too large to be given up.

The same session of the General Assembly passed a law providing for the creation of a state board of arbitration for the adjustment of wage disputes between employer and employe, which although falling far short of the objects for which it was created, has done much to settle these ever recurring troubles, without a resort to strikes. As long as

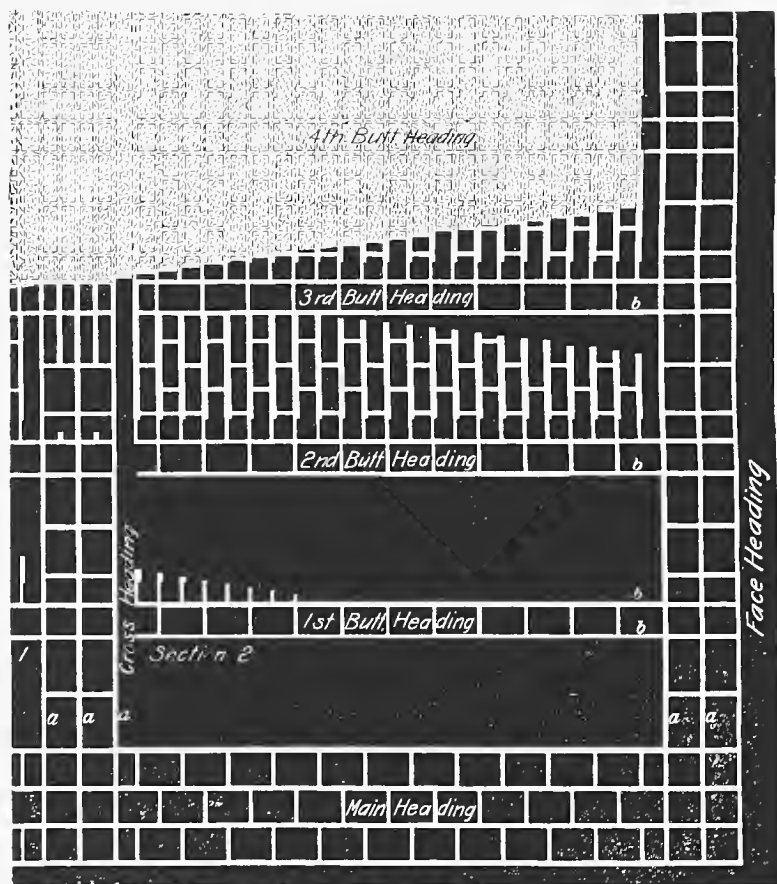
the present industrial system endures, there will be conflicts between employer and employe. Political economists may tell us that the interests of labor and capital are identical; but that is only a half truth; if it were wholly true, strikes would never be resorted to by labor, nor lockouts by capital, to enforce demands.

Touching the cause of the great strike, and the means of preventing a recurrence of such conflicts, the committee found that it was simply and only the old quarrel between employe and employer in regard to wages, which no legislation could prevent without infringing upon the rights of one or the other of the parties. Neither interest asked for any legislation.

The strike was inaugurated on the 23d of June, 1884, and lasted until the 18th of March, 1885, when it was settled by a conference of delegates of the operators and miners by the acceptance of the 50 cent rate and the withdrawal of the iron-clad contract. During the nine months of its duration, the miners of other fields, and in many cases the operators as well, contributed liberally to the support of the strikers. The distributing committee, with headquarters at New Straitsville, consisted of Chris Evans, president; Samuel David, secretary; John W. White, treasurer; and Alexander Johnson and Thomas Lawson, auditing committee, and received in food and clothing, twenty-six thousand, seven hundred and forty dollars, and sixty-seven cents; and in money, seventy thousand, three hundred and thirty-three dollars and forty-eight cents; making a total of ninety-seven thousand and seventy-four dollars and fifteen cents, for the support of the strike; all of which was distributed among the poor and needy of the strikers.

Both sides came out of the conflict covered with wounds; but the lesson taught was worth the sacrifice to miners and operators alike, not only in the Hocking Valley of Ohio, but in every coal field in the United States. It taught the

miners the necessity of a national organization, and made the operators ready and willing to treat with their employes on equal terms. The annual wage scale, which is now settled by a joint convention of miners and operators on equal terms, had its conception in the prolonged strike of the Hocking Valley miners.



MINES AND MINERALS

DRAWING PILLARS AS THE WORKINGS ADVANCE.



## CHAPTER XX.

## NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MINERS. — MINERS AND OPERATORS ADOPT THE ANNUAL WAGE SCALE.

**F**OR eight or nine years after the collapse of the Miners' National Association in 1876, the craft was without any federal union. The great mining states of Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois, possessed state organizations which had from time to time secured advances in wages, not only to the organizations themselves; but indirectly at least, to the craft along the whole line.

The extraordinary demand for coal which followed upon the heels of the revival of business after the panic had spent its force in 1879, stimulated the building of new railroads into virgin coal fields. The coal market, which is among the first to feel a depression in business, is also among the first to recover from a depression in business.

All the markets of the country now became open to all the coal producing fields; and when the least depression occurred, many operators, through necessity or choice made haste to cut prices in order to secure contracts. This meant a reduction of wages at the mines affected by the cut, the operators justifying their course by informing their miners that they had cut the market in order to give them steady work, careless of the fact that a reduction must follow along the whole line, or be resisted by a strike.

The necessity of a national organization of miners to prevent this cutting policy became transparent to the mining leaders. John McBride, president of the Ohio Miners' State Union, one of the far-seeing men in the craft, issued a call to the miners of the United States to meet in convention in the city of Indianapolis, Ind., on the 9th of September, 1885,

for the purpose of forming a National Federation of the miners and mine laborers of the United States. Seven states answered the call, namely: Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa and Kansas. Daniel McLaughlin, of Illinois, was elected chairman of the convention, who on taking the chair, delivered a brief address on the condition of the miners of his state, and of the miners of the country in general. All the delegates, from personal choice, as well as by instructions from their constituents, favored the organization of a National Union of miners. A constitution was adopted, having for its objects the promotion of the interests of the miners and mine laborers, morally, socially and financially; the protection of the health and safety of miners; to spread intelligence among the craft; to remove as far as possible, the cause of strikes; the adoption of arbitration and restriction; to shorten the miner's work-day to eight hours; the adoption of the two weeks pay system; and the abolition of the truck store system in all its forms.

The executive and legislative power of the Association was vested in an executive board, composed of five members at large, one member from each of the coal producing states, and one member from the anthracite field of Pennsylvania. One executive secretary, one treasurer and five members at large, of the general executive board, elected at the annual convention of the association, were charged with the administration of the union. A per capita tax was to be levied on each member to raise revenue to defray the expenses of the organization.

Christopher Evans of Ohio was elected executive secretary; and Daniel McLaughlin of Illinois, treasurer. The *National Labor Tribune*, of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, was made the official organ; the union was named the National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers of the United States and Territories.

Christopher Evans, who was elected the chief executive officer, was born in England, in 1841, and emigrated to the United States in 1869, settling in Mercer county, Pennsylvania. He took an active part in miners' affairs from the first, pointing out to his fellow-miners the necessity of organization. He assisted in raising a fund to erect a miner's institute, and in organizing a literary society at the mine where he worked. At that time he was an indifferent speaker, but soon acquired the art of expressing himself with clearness and force in the debating society. He was a delegate to the first annual convention of the Miners' National Association held in Cleveland in 1873, representing the miners of the Shenango Valley of Pennsylvania.

In 1877 Evans moved to New Straitsville, Ohio, and has resided in the Hocking Valley ever since. He soon became a leader in that coal field. During the stormy period of the development of the region he took a leading, but unostentatious part in all the movements of the miners, being noted for his modesty and unassuming character. While battling for the just rights of the miners, he counseled respect and obedience to law. He was a delegate to every state convention of the Ohio Miners' Amalgamated Association, in which he was one of the most conspicuous figures; and was president of the Hocking Valley miners during their great struggle in 1884-5.

Evans was elected executive secretary of the National Federation of Miners each year until 1889, when the union became merged into the National Progressive Union. He was chairman of the first joint conference of operators and miners which met in Columbus in 1886 to formulate the annual scale, was secretary of the joint conciliatory board for the first year, and secretary of the second and third conferences. He was respected alike by both the miners and operators as secretary. In 1889 he was elected secretary of the American Federation of Labor, with headquarters in New

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CHRISTOPHER EVANS.

York, and was annually elected to this office for five years, when he declined a re-election on the ground that as a miner had been chosen president, it would not be proper for him to accept the secretaryship.

When the Federation of Labor moved its headquarters to Indianapolis in 1895, the executive council requested Evans

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to go with the new officers and assist them in their work, and he was with them for several months. Afterward, the American Federation sent him into the West Virginia coal field to assist in the organization of the miners of that state, and kept him there until after the suspension of 1897, when he was appointed by the United Mine Workers as organizer for the several fields of the United States.

Chris Evans has been longer in the service of the miners than any other man, and in all these years the breath of suspicion has never been raised against a single act of his life. He was never a candidate for office in the miners' union, belonging to that old school of the craft which held that the office should seek the man, and not the man the office. He was never an extremist, but was fair-minded and conscientious, modest and honest. The mine workers of America have not a truer or more unselfish official in their ranks.

It was in the convention of 1885 that the movement for establishing a wage scale by a joint convention of miners and operators had its birth, the idea having been conceived by Daniel McLaughlin, the chairman of the convention. In a letter to the *National Labor Tribune*, published a few weeks before the convention, McLaughlin, after reverting to the deplorable condition of the coal trade, caused by the bitter and protracted strikes of the miners, suggested that the convention extend an invitation to all the coal operators in the United States to meet the miners, to devise a plan for the establishment of an annual wage scale for the purpose of giving stability to the trade, and thus better the condition of the miners. He concluded by saying that he would bring the matter up for the consideration of the Indianapolis convention.

Accordingly, Chairman McLaughlin, in a few well considered remarks, brought the question before the delegates. John McBride and Chris Evans ably and earnestly spoke in

favor of the idea as outlined by the chairman and before the convention adjourned, a resolution was adopted directing Executive Secretary Evans to invite by letter, every operator in the United States to meet the executive board of the National Federation of Miners in the city of Chicago on October 15, 1885. In accordance with this resolution, Secretary Evans issued the following invitation:

*"To the Mine Operators of the United States and Territories:*

"GENTLEMEN — The following resolution was adopted at a meeting of the Executive Board of the National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers held in Indianapolis, September 12, 1885:

*"Resolved,* That our secretary be authorized to draft an address to the mine operators of the United States and Territories, asking for a joint meeting with the board for the purpose of adjusting market and mining prices in such a way as to avoid strikes and lockouts, and give to each party an increased profit from the sale of coal.

"I therefore respectfully solicit a representation from your body to meet said board at a meeting to be held in Chicago, Illinois, on Thursday, October 12, 1885, at 10 o'clock a. m. to consider the above questions, with the earnest desire that a more practical system may be adopted that will harmonize our feelings, and bring about the much-needed reformation required at the hands of both parties interested. Trusting that this invitation will be accepted in good faith, and that good results will follow,

I am very respectfully yours,

CHRIS EVANS,

Executive Secretary."

Not an operator in the United States took any notice of the invitation, with the exception of W. P. Rend of Chicago, and but for his presence at the meeting of the miners' executive board, the proposed joint movement would in all probability

have proved an utter failure. He was an earnest man and an eloquent orator, and possessed the art of inspiring others with the same sentiments which he held. Rend urged the executive board to persevere in the plan, and at his suggestion the board, through Secretary Evans, sent out another invitation to operators having business offices in Chicago. A dozen or more, representing interests in the more important mining districts in the soft coal regions of the United States, responded to this second call.

With such a meager attendance on the part of the operators, no attempt was made to formulate a scale; but the operators present, after listening to the arguments of the miners' executive board, appointed a committee to join the miners' board in an address to call another joint convention to meet in Pittsburg, December 14th. The following is the address:

*To the Miners and Mine Owners of the States and Territories:*

"At a meeting held in Indianapolis, September 12, 1885, by the Executive Board of the National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers, a resolution was passed, instructing its secretary to draft an address to the mine operators of the United States and Territories, asking for a joint meeting with the board for the purpose of adjusting market and mining prices in such a way as to avoid strikes and lockouts, and give each party an increased profit from the sale of coal.

"In pursuance of this call and in response to this invitation a convention assembled in Chicago, October 15, 1885, composed of a number of coal operators having mines in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, and the delegates representing miners employed in the various coal producing regions of the country.

"The undersigned committee, consisting of three mine owners, and three delegates representing the miners' organization, were appointed to make a general public presentation

of the objects and purposes of this convention, and to extend an invitation to all those engaged in coal mining in America, to lend their active co-operation toward the establishment of harmony and friendship between capital and labor in this large and important industry.

"The undersigned committee believe that this convention will prove to be the inauguration of a new era for the settlement of the industrial question in our mining regions in accordance with intelligent reasoning, and based upon fair play and mutual justice.

"The history and experience of the past make it apparent to every intelligent and thoughtful mind that strikes and lockouts are false agencies and brutal resorts for the adjustment of the disputes and controversies arising between the employing capital, and employed labor. They have become evils of the greatest magnitude, not only to those immediately concerned in them but also to general society, being fruitful sources of public disturbance, riot and bloodshed. Sad illustrations of this truth are now being witnessed in certain of our large cities, and in several of the mining and manufacturing centers of the country. These industrial conflicts generally involve waste of capital on the one hand and the impoverishment of labor on the other. They engender bitter feelings of prejudice and enmity, and enkindle the destructive passions of hate and revenge, bearing in their train the curses of wide-spread misery and wretchedness. They are contrary to the true spirit of American institutions, and violate every principle of human justice and of Christian charity.

"Apart and in conflict capital and labor became agents of evil, while united they create blessings of plenty and prosperity, and enable man to utilize and enjoy the bounteous resources intended for his use and happiness by the Almighty.

"Capital represents the accumulation, or savings, of past labor, while labor is the most sacred part of capital. Each has its respective duties and obligations toward the other.



Capital is entitled to fair and just remuneration for its risks and its use, and must have security and protection, while labor, on the other hand, is as fully and justly entitled to reward for its toil and its sacrifices. Each is entitled to its equitable share, and there is no law, either human or divine, to justify the one impoverishing and crushing the other. God tells us, "The laborer is worthy of his hire," and threatens the vengeance of Heaven upon the oppressors of the poor.

"The question of what one should pay and the other receive in compensation can best be determined by friendly conferences, where intelligence and arbitration will take the place of the usual irrational and cruel methods of the past. It is evident that the general standard of reward for labor has sunk too low, by reason of reductions that have taken place during the past few years, and that miners generally are receiving inadequate compensation in an employment full of toil and danger.

"It is equally true that the wide-spread depression of business, the over-production of coal, and the consequent severe competition have caused the capital invested in mines to yield little or no profitable returns. The constant reductions of wages that have lately taken place have afforded no relief to capital, and indeed, have but tended to increase its embarrassments. Any reduction in labor in any coal field necessitates and generates a corresponding reduction in every other competitive coal field. If the price of labor in the United States was uniformly raised to the standard of three years ago and the employers of labor would occupy toward each other the same relative position in point of competition as at present, such an advance would prove beneficial to their interests, as it would materially help to remove the present general discontent of the miners in their employment. However, such a general advance can not be made at the present time from the fact that already contracts in many districts have been made between the coal operators and their miners

which will last until next spring; also that contracts have been entered into with manufacturers and large consumers of coal which will continue in force up to the same time.

"The committee would therefore suggest and invite that another meeting shall take place at Pittsburg on December 15th next, where it is hoped there will be a full representation of the miners and mine owners throughout the various states and territories, and where permanent action may be taken, looking to the improvement of both interests.

"The committee feel that this question of labor is one of vital importance, and it must be met in a spirit of conciliation, and that the problems connected with it require studied thought, that it may lead to some wise and happy solution.

"This is the first movement of a national character in America, taken with the intention of the establishment of labor conciliation, and while many practical difficulties may present themselves in retarding the attainment of the laudable end in view, it is to be hoped that at least an honest general effort shall be put forth by the operators and miners.

"The intelligence and progress of the age demands this. Our material interests demand it. Common justice demands it. The internal peace of our common country demands it. Respect for the dignity of American honor demands it. The security of capital demands it.

"The freedom hitherto enjoyed in this country by our well rewarded labor and the intelligence and dignity of the American workingman have been matters of congratulation alike gratifying to our civil pride and conducive to our national glory. Our industrial progress, the continuance of our unexampled prosperity, the peace of society, and security of our free form of government, each and all demand that the American workingman shall receive just and liberal wages and decent treatment. The workingmen in our mines, in our factories, and in our farms compose not only a vast

array of citizenship, but constitute our mighty standing army, which is ever ready for the defense of our country's rights and our country's honor.

"They have built up our national wealth in a marvelous degree, and to its present gigantic proportions, and are entitled to receive in the future, as in the past, not the wages of European pauperism, but a more generous reward, which will enable them to maintain the dignity of their manly labor and protect their freedom.

W. P. REND,	CHRISTOPHER EVANS,
A. L. SWEET,	DANIEL McLAUGHLIN,
D. C. JENNE,	J. B. FLEMING,
Operators.	Miners."

The Pittsburg convention met on the 14th of December. While the attendance was larger than that of the Chicago meeting it contained too few delegates representing the operators to legislate for the whole mining interests of the country. It appointed a joint committee to prepare a scale of wages for the government of the districts represented. The committee directed John McBride to draw up a scale for the consideration of the joint conference. He duly presented one, which was long and seriously discussed by both interests without reaching an agreement, and the conference adjourned to meet in Columbus, Ohio, February 23, 1886.

The Columbus convention was a good representative body of both interests, and organized by electing a miner — Chris Evans, of Ohio, president, and an operator, T. T. Bent, of Illinois, secretary. So novel and startling a proposition for the adjustment of wage disputes, found many earnest advocates, and many determined opponents, among the mining operators. The proceedings of the convention were watched with the keenest interest by the general public, and especially by all parties interested in the coal trade. Would the lion and the tiger lie down together? The editor of *The Black Diamond*, of Chicago, declared in his paper the week before

the meeting of the convention, that the movement was the best scheme ever devised to bring harmony to the conflicting interests represented, but feared that it could not succeed, because the mining operators, having more business knowledge and experience, and greater familiarity with parliamentary usages than the miners, would take advantage of them, which would produce a revolt in their ranks, and put a speedy termination to the movement.

The following week, however, the editor of *The Black Diamond*, who had been an interested spectator of the proceedings of the convention, made an apology for the article, and declared that it was the operators, and not the miners who needed sympathy, the miners being the best informed on trade conditions; the best parliamentarians and the best able to present their side of the case. All this is true, for the miners' officials made it their business, as in duty bound, to study trade conditions; and had acquired the power of expressing their thoughts by practice in their meetings, with an eloquence which would do honor to the Halls of Congress; while their employers were too busy with their business affairs to give their time to the niceties of parliamentary usages, or to the art of expressing their thoughts in well rounded periods.

The four great mining states, namely, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, were represented by the operators with seventy-seven delegates, the majority of whom were from Ohio; the miners sent thirty-six delegates representing six mining states, namely, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Maryland and West Virginia. The basis of representation was four votes for each state represented by the operators, and four votes from each state represented by the miners.

A spirit of fairness was exhibited by both sides in the debates on the scale, as well as on all other matters brought before the convention, and not an ill-natured remark was heard during the whole proceedings.

The convention adopted the Pittsburg scale, to take effect on the 1st of May, 1886, as follows:

	PER TON.
Pittsburg .....	71 cents.
Hocking Valley .....	60 cents.
Indiana Block .....	80 cents.
Indiana Bituminous No. 1.....	65 cents.
Indiana No. 2.....	75 cents.
Wilmington, Ill. ....	95 cents.
Streator, Ill. ....	80 cents.
Grape Creek .....	75 cents.
Reynoldsville, Fairmont .....	71 cents.
Des Moines, Iowa .....	90 cents.

In the Kanawha district of West Virginia, the rate per ton was to be restored to 75 cents. The scale was to remain in force from May 1, 1886, to April 30, 1887. A board of arbitration was created, consisting of five miners and five operators at large, and one miner and one operator from each of the coal producing states represented on the scale, for the adjustment of such questions as might arise of an interstate or national character, and that the miners and operators of the states represented at the conference, elect similar boards.

All questions arising in any district different from the scale, were to be settled by the miners and the operators affected, by arbitration.

The national board elected Oscar Townsend, president, and Chris Evans, secretary.

The convention then adjourned to meet again on the 2nd Tuesday in February, 1887, in the city of Columbus.

A meeting of the national board of arbitration was held in Columbus the following April, for the purpose of considering the eight-hour question. Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and West Virginia were represented by both miners and operators; but Pennsylvania sent no delegates. A spirited discussion was held on the question of reducing the day's work to eight

hours; but no action was taken, the operators claiming that they had no authority from their constituents to act on the subject. A resolution was adopted recommending the operators on the board to call a meeting of all operators of mines in the States represented on the national arbitration board, to consider the eight-hour question, and to instruct their representatives on the board so that general action could be taken at the next meeting.

Another meeting was held in September, in Indianapolis, to consider the eight-hour question; but neither Pennsylvania nor West Virginia was represented, and nothing was done except to pass a resolution recommending that a uniform number of hours for a day's work be referred to the next annual joint meeting of miners and operators to be held in Columbus on the second Tuesday of February, 1887.

A third meeting of the board was held in Indianapolis in December to consider a grievance presented by the State board of miners and operators of Indiana in regard to the meaning of the scale as applying to the block coal district of that state — the miners contending that the 80 cent rate was the minimum price, while the operators insisted that it was both a minimum and a maximum price. The national board referred the question to the forthcoming joint convention on the ground that it had not been thoroughly considered at the first joint convention.

The new departure in substituting reason for brute force in the adjustment of trade disputes between the miners and operators worked very satisfactorily. The hatreds and feuds of the past gave way before kindness and courtesy, and inspired both sides with respect for each other. By coming face to face to discuss their differences, the operators discovered that the miners' leaders were not a class of ignorant demagogues and mischief-makers, who lived and waxed fat by appealing to the prejudice and stupidity of the miners; but that they were honest and honorable men, devoted to the

amelioration of their fellow-craftsmen, and were amenable to reason when fairly dealt with. The miners, on the other hand, discovered that the operators were, as a rule, men of honor, and not a set of unprincipled robbers and tyrants whose chief purpose in life was to oppress their employes, and reduce them to the lowest depths of degradation.

Daniel McLaughlin, the father of the joint convention system for the adjustment of miners' wages by an annual scale, was born in Scotland, in 1830, and began work in the mines of his native country before he was ten years of age. He was a personal friend of Alexander McDonald, the celebrated miners' leader of Great Britain, assisted in electing him secretary of the miners of Scotland in 1861 and was one of McDonald's right-hand lieutenants until the year 1868, in which year McLaughlin emigrated to the United States, settling in Braidwood, Illinois. McLaughlin was also personally acquainted with Sir Archibald Allison, the author of the *History of Europe*, from the outbreak of the French Revolution to the downfall of Napoleon. The great historian, who was an ardent student of our civil war, would engage McLaughlin in conversation as he was returning home from the mine, and point out on the map the relative position of Grant's and Lee's armies, and predict the speedy overthrow of the rebellion.

"Old Dan" (as he was fondly called, by his admirers in the United States), who had witnessed the benefits which flow from intelligent organization, led by skillful delegates, in England, took an active part from the first in organizing the American miners. He was a delegate to the miners' national convention held at Youngstown, Ohio, in 1873, which elected John Siney, president, and was himself elected a member of the executive board of that organization. He was for many years a conspicuous figure at every national convention of miners in this country, and possessed the confidence of the craft in a greater degree for unswerving honesty of purpose,

and sturdy independence of character, than perhaps any other leader of his time. While an uncompromising advocate of the just rights of labor, he never allowed himself to share or encourage those pernicious prejudices against employers so often indulged in by men seeking popularity in the ranks of trades unions. He felt that to employ labor was honorable, and he was never afraid to say and do right. He was president of the Miners' State Union of Illinois in 1880, was twice elected mayor of Braidwood, Illinois; was mayor of that town when the dreadful accident occurred at the Diamond mine near that place, and was indefatigable in raising the \$40,000 fund for the helpless widows and orphans of that dreadful catastrophe. He was twice vice-president of the American Federation of Labor; was twice elected to the Legislature of Illinois, from Will county, and distinguished himself in that body as the friend and champion of legislation in the interest of labor.

In 1889, McLaughlin accepted the superintendency of the Starkville Coal and Coke Company of Colorado, a position he held for eleven years, and which he resigned in 1900 owing to old age and increasing infirmities, the result of sixty years of exhausting subterranean toil. He died in the spring of 1901 in Chicago. The miners and operators of the United States should join and erect a monument to his memory. They owe him this debt of gratitude.

The mining operator, who so ably seconded the proposition of the miners for the establishment of the joint convention of miners and operators to formulate an annual scale of wages was W. P. Rend. The address calling the convention of miners and operators to meet in Pittsburg, December 14th, 1885, bears the impress of his gifted pen. It is replete with manly eloquence, and pays a noble tribute to the dignity and to the rights of labor, and demands as a right inherent in American citizenship that the workingmen should receive fair and decent treatment, and just and liberal wages.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE WARRING FACTIONS UNITE. — FORMATION OF THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA.

THE Knights of Labor, which at one time possessed nearly a million members, spread with great rapidity among the coal miners. This organization was the best educational institution for workingmen ever devised. Its purpose was noble and holy. It taught that industrial and moral worth, not wealth, was the true standard of individual and national greatness. The halls in which the local assemblies held their weekly meetings, were frequently owned by members on the co-operative plan, and were workingmen's schools. Discussions were held in every local on industrial subjects, and on all other matters affecting the amelioration of labor, which developed a taste for reading and research, and taught members the art of expressing their thoughts in forcible and even eloquent language. Many of the present leaders and able speakers in the ranks of the United Mine Workers of America, took their first lessons in public speaking in the local assembly room of the Knights of Labor.

When the National Federation of Miners was organized in 1885, locals of the Knights of Labor were scattered all over the mining regions of the United States. The members (of which there were many thousands) were devotedly attached to the order, and believed it to be the only organization of workingmen capable of managing the affairs of the mining craft. The Knights beheld the formation of the National Federation of Miners with no friendly feeling, and at once took steps to organize a National District of the Knights of

Labor composed of miners. At the annual convention of the general assembly of the order held in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1885, permission was given the miners to form a National District with full and final power over all local and district assemblies composed of a majority of miners. John F. Young was elected president pro tem, and W. H. Smith secretary pro tem for the special purpose of issuing a call to all district and local assemblies composed of miners and mine laborers in the United States, to send delegates to a convention to be held in St. Louis, Thursday, May 20, 1886, to form a National Trades Assembly of the mining craft.

The convention, which met pursuant to call, elected John F. Young, chairman, and W. H. Smith, secretary, and organized the Knights of Labor National Assembly of coal miners and mine laborers. The general officers were a Master Workman, a Worthy Foreman, a Secretary-Treasurer, an Auditor and an Executive Board. Wm. M. Bailey of Ohio, was elected Master Workman; Isaiah Philips of Pennsylvania, Worthy Foreman; Lewis James of Ohio, Secretary-Treasurer, and Wm. Beal of Missouri, Auditor. After transacting the necessary business for putting the national district in working order, the convention adjourned to meet in Indianapolis on the third Wednesday of September, 1886.

There were now two national organizations of miners in the coal fields of the United States, the members of which were sincerely and devotedly attached to the union to which they belonged. The great Napoleon once said that one bad general was better than two good ones. In like manner, one bad National organization of the coal miners was better than two good ones. It was a house divided against itself and could not stand. A bitter feeling sprang up between the rival unions resembling the religious dissensions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Each organization strove for supremacy. They worked like balky horses in a team, to the infinite delight of the mining operators. The quarrels and

bickerings extended to nearly every coal mine in America, and were not always wordy ones, the opposing miners frequently using their strong right arms to prove the superiority of their respective organizations.

The National Federation held its second annual convention in Indianapolis on the 7th of September, 1886, at which a resolution was passed, declaring that their organization was the only one capable of transacting the business of the miners of the United States, and directing the executive board to issue a manifesto defining the position of the Federation on this subject. The manifesto, after giving the reasons for the organization of the National Federation of Miners, set forth the good results which had flowed from it since it was established, declaring that through its influence the operators and miners had been brought closer together, the bitter animosities of the past, which had caused so many strikes and lockouts, and brought so much misery and distress to the homes of the miners, had been allayed. Confidence had been restored and a joint understanding arrived at between operators and miners conceded to be the grandest effort ever made by the miners of this country toward establishing peace and harmony between employer and employed, and at the same time securing better results to every member of the craft. "To our utmost surprise," declared the address, "just as our National Federation had begun to show its influence, a rival steps in between us, emanating from the noble order of the Knights of Labor, which formed a similar organization, known as the Miners' and Mine Laborers' National District Assembly, following our footsteps in almost every particular and — as a fire-brand thrown in among us — is only calculated to create discord and disunite the miners and mine laborers of the country, and bring ruinous and disastrous effects upon the members of our trade. On behalf of those we represent, we say: beware of the designing ones that are circulating rumors through the Associated Press, that

our trades union is being turned over to the Knights of Labor. It is false and only calculated to deceive you and work destruction to our National Federation. While anxious, as our constitution says, to assist all similar organizations which have the same object in view, to wit, mutual protection, and the protection of labor against the encroachments of capital, yet we will not tolerate nor assist in building up any organization that seeks to destroy our trade unions, and in unmistakable language we inform one and all that the National Federation of Miners and Mine Laborers intend to transact its own business as a trades union, and to free itself from the manipulations of selfish individuals that are bent upon the destruction of our National Trades Union."

The National Trades Assembly of the Knights of Labor miners held its first annual convention in Indianapolis a few days after the adjournment of the National Federation, and passed a resolution that in case the Federation of Miners carried out its threat, not to recognize the Knights of Labor, nor admit its representatives on an equal basis in the adjustment of trade disputes, the Knights would consider themselves under no obligation to abide by or conform to any agreement made between the Federation and the operators; but pledged itself to strictly and faithfully maintain any scale adopted, if admitted to representation on an equal basis with the Federation.

Provision was made at this convention to put a number of organizers in the field for the purpose of bringing, not only all districts and local assemblies of miners into the fold of the National District of the Knights of Labor, but of covering the whole mining craft with the shield of the order, "to raise the craft to the dignity of a trade, and throw such safeguards around it as would keep it on a plane with any other branch of honorable toil."

The Executive Board of the Federation, alarmed at the threat of the Knights to decline to sanction any agreement

made by the Federation with the operators unless the Knights were allowed equal representation, concluded that discretion was the better part of valor, and made haste to extend the olive branch to the rival union. The board offered to meet the Knights of Labor board to consider a plan of agreement upon which the two boards could meet the operators to formulate the annual scale; but the Knights were sullen and obstinate. On the second of April, 1887, the executive board of the Federation again made overtures for a meeting of the two boards to harmonize the interests of all concerned, and work for the general welfare of the miners of the whole country. The executive secretary of the Federation was directed to notify the secretary of the Knights to this effect. The secretary replied, by direction of the master workman, that the Knights of Labor board would meet the board of the Federation in Cincinnati on the third of June following. But inasmuch as the interstate board of miners and operators was to meet in May to consider whether the Columbus scale had been substantially complied with, it was all important that the two organizations should pool their issues before this meeting.

John McBride, president of the Ohio Miners' Union, now tried to pour oil on the troubled waters. In a letter to Master Workman Bailey, he urged a meeting of the two boards, and advised that all should forget the bitterness of feeling which had been engendered by acrimonious discussion regarding the merits and defects of the respective unions. He appealed to the master workman to waive any feeling of hostility towards the Federation, and reminded him of the old proverb that while the grass was growing the horse was starving; and that while the rival unions were fighting, the cause of labor was suffering.

At the second annual convention, which was held in Cincinnati, Bailey declined to stand for re-election, and was succeeded by William T. Lewis. The local assembly of

Shawnee, Ohio, to which both of these men belonged, was one of the best in the state. The double-story building in which the assembly met, was owned by the local, having been built on the co-operative plan. The two lower rooms were rented out for stores, and the assembly hall was supplied with books and papers for the use of members. At every weekly meeting, original essays were read, and discussion held on industrial subjects to educate and train members for the varied duties of American citizenship.

Master Workman Lewis was a young man of commanding presence, and possessed a fairly good education. He was ambitious to make a career in the labor movement, and for nearly two years was indefatigable in promoting the interests of the National District, throwing all the energy of his active mind into the cause.

At the third annual convention of the district, the master workman in opening the session, said: "This organization was born under a threat and baptized in abuse; not, as might be looked for from organized capital, but from organized labor as represented by those who failed to use the order to accomplish their own ends. Your officers have endured their misrepresentations and insinuations in silence, waiting for the verdict of the mining craft; and that verdict, in five hundred local assemblies, in sixteen states, is in favor of this district, and this form of organization, with every encouragement to continue in the good work so well begun."

A few months after these hopeful words were uttered, Lewis suddenly reached the conclusion that National District No. 135 of the Knights had proved a failure, and undertook without the knowledge or consent of his associates, to turn it over to the management and control of the National Federation of Miners. Robert Watchorn, who had been elected secretary-treasurer of the National District at the Cleveland convention, on learning the purpose of the master workman, issued a circular to the various locals urging the deposition of

Lewis, with the view of saving the National District. A vast preponderance of the Knights of Labor miners were opposed to the scheme of Lewis for the abandonment of the National District; but he was in the fight and proposed to see it out.

Two conventions were called to meet in Columbus, December 5th, one by the officials of the National Federation of Miners, the other by Lewis, representing the Knights of Labor miners, for the purpose of deciding upon a form of organization for the amalgamation of the dual union. The Knights of Labor delegates met in secret convention, in advance of the joint conference, and it soon developed that Lewis had only a few followers. Finding that the convention was opposed to the abandonment of the National District, Lewis declared that he would work for a new organization, regardless of what the convention would do. A resolution was offered and carried by an almost unanimous vote, to meet the representatives of the Federation of Miners in joint convention for the purpose, not of unification; but for conciliation and co-operation. Lewis declared, on the adoption of the motion, that the question of conciliation and co-operation would not be entertained by the Federation of Miners — that it was unification or nothing.

The joint conference met and elected Lewis chairman. He appointed a number of orators to debate the question for or against one organization. The debaters were selected with impartiality, each side being accorded an equal number of speakers, and a given time in which to deliver their speeches. The ablest orators in the ranks of the two organizations were there, and spoke with an earnestness and ability that would have done honor to members of Congress. The Knights of Labor delegates were not ready to abandon their splendid organization, and merge it in a faction, which was unwilling to concede anything but a change of name. At the close of the debate, a resolution was offered in behalf of the Federation, declaring that in the event of the Knights of Labor

delegates declining to join the Federation of Miners in the formation of a single and distinct union, the Federation would decline to continue the existing agreement between the two organizations, and would further decline to entertain any proposition whatever, except it had in view the formation of a single union. Upon the reading of this resolution all the Knights of Labor delegates, with the exception of Lewis and a few others, walked out of the convention and returned to their own hall.

The delegates representing the Federation of Miners continued in session after the withdrawal of the Knights, and adopted a new constitution, which provided for the election of a president instead of an executive secretary to look after the interests of the association. John McBride was elected President, and Patrick McBryde, Secretary-Treasurer, and the name of the organization was changed from that of the "National Federation of Miners" to the "National Progressive Union." The feeling between the rival unions was now more bitter than ever.

The Knights of Labor delegates on returning to their own hall, continued the session. John B. Rae, worthy foreman, acted as master workman. He reopened the session duly and regularly for the transaction of further business. He stated that inasmuch as the joint session had failed to accomplish the conciliation and co-operation of forces, the assembly would proceed with such business as might be necessary to strengthen the National District. "With hard work and untiring zeal the Knights of Labor miners would protect the rights and advance the interests of the mine workers in the future better than in the past, since the National District had got rid of the disturbing element in its ranks." John B. Rae was elected master workman; Robert Linn, worthy foreman, and Robert Watchorn, secretary-treasurer.

Each wing was more fully convinced now than ever that it was right and the other wrong, and that the future well-being



of the craft depended in the adoption of its general public policy. In every mine there were angry discussions between members of the respective organizations, and when arguments failed to convince the debaters, they frequently resorted to blows.

The general officers, Rae and Watchorn, were indefatigable in the cause of the National District of the Knights; they visited the locals and not only appealed to them not to lose heart; but urged them to assume the aggressive, and spread the gospel of the Knights of Labor among the unorganized miners until all were covered with the shield of the order. Watchorn, who possessed unwearied industry, not only spent his salary in traveling from local to local, but paid office rent and organizers' salaries out of his own pocket.

During these times of turmoil and trouble, when the miners were divided against themselves, the Knights sometimes opened their locals with songs in honor of National District 135, and in denunciation of the Progressive Union. One of these songs made in honor of a visit of Watchorn was sung before he addressed the meeting:

Come brothers of the K. of L.  
Wherever you belong;  
You noble sons of honest toil  
And join us in a song  
In honor of one thirty-five,  
The miners' pride and joy,  
Which traitors and the N. P. U.  
Conspired to destroy.

But members of the K. of L.  
Who labor underground,  
Without regard to district lines  
Were soon together bound.  
They called a halt, and took a hand,  
And leaders true arose,

Who foiled the miscreants at their work  
And did their schemes expose.

They bared their bosoms to the storm,  
Those noble men and true,  
Stood by the ship and took the helm  
And brought her safely through.

All honor to those gallant men,  
To Watchorn and to Rae.  
Such leaders of our noble cause  
Are not found every day.

While the internecine war was going on, the miners of the west were engaged in a strike, which proved an absolute failure, owing largely to the division in the ranks of the miners. The operators, who enjoyed the bitter rivalry of the contending factions, held out, knowing that it was simply a question of time until the dissensions of the miners would defeat themselves and disintegrate both organizations.

The war of opposing forces could not last forever. The loss of the great strikes in Illinois and Indiana, sobered the combatants. The leaders ceased shaking their fists in each other's faces and shook hands. A conference of both unions was called to devise a plan to bring about conciliation and co-operation.

The mistake which the open union made a year ago was in attempting to dictate the terms by which the two unions could unite. The Knights were peremptorily asked to disband their splendid national District, and join the open organization in a body. No proposition for uniting the two branches was possible which did not recognize National District 135, and admit it on an equality with the open union. When the Progressive Union was ready to do this, the way was clear to heal the wounds given and taken in one of the most bitter fights that ever divided the miners of the United States.

At the annual convention of the National Trades Assembly of the Knights of Labor miners, held in Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, in September, 1889, the general officers were instructed to call a national convention of all organized and unorganized miners in the United States to take action on the following questions: The establishment of a relative scale of prices in all competing fields; the abolition of the truck system; to regulate the hours of labor; secure semi-monthly pay, and to consolidate the various miners' unions under one head. The miners were appealed to in the most solemn manner to cease warring on each other, and to elect delegates to the convention, of such intelligence and numbers as would make the session the largest, most harmonious and most successful ever convened in the United States. The officials of the Progressive Union united with the Knights in an address to both organizations, pointing out the disastrous consequences which had resulted to the craft in the past from the bitter and relentless war of the contending factions. A plan of co-operation and conciliation as agreed upon by the general officers of both organizations, was submitted to every local assembly of the Knights miners, and to every local of the National Progressive Union in the United States and Territories, and all were requested to send delegates to a national convention to be held in Columbus, Ohio, on the 22d of January, 1890, instructed to vote for or against the following propositions:

First. To unite the two organizations under one general headed to govern and protect the interests of miners and mine laborers. This union to be effected without sacrificing the essential features of either organization.

Second. The organization to be divided into national, district and local divisions; the meetings of which to be either secret, or open as the members may determine, or the exigencies of the case may require: that is to say, the meaning of the terms "open and secret" shall be construed as applying

to the meetings of the National Progressive Union, or the National District Assembly No. 135 Knights of Labor, as the case may be.

Third. Equal taxation on the affiliated members.

Fourth. One staff of officers for the national and one for each district and local organizations, in which due provision shall be made for visiting and directing the business of both branches of both organizations.

The joint convention met in Columbus, Ohio, January 23rd and was in session five days.

John McBride was elected president, and Robert Watchorn secretary of the convention. The officers of the rival organizations sat on the platform beside the president and secretary, listening with breathless interest to the speeches of the delegates, and dreading lest some rash orator would excite the two factions, while discussing the question of consolidation. No resolution in favor of a joint union was to be considered as adopted that did not receive a three-fourths vote of the delegates of each organization.

The four propositions were voted on separately and all were adopted. The scene that followed beggars description. Delegates shouted themselves hoarse; threw their hats aloft; and tears coursed down the cheeks of gray-haired men.

A committee consisting of James White, Robert Linn, L. M. Beatty, John B. Rae, Robert Watchorn, David Ross, John Kane, J. H. Taylor, John McBride and Patrick McBryde was appointed to draft a constitution for the united miners. John B. Rae was elected president, and master workman; Wm. H. Turner, vice president; Robert Watchorn, secretary-treasurer. The following were elected members of the national executive board: W. W. Webb, Wm. Scaife, John Kane, and R. F. Warren.

Hon. David Ross, in a well chosen speech, introduced the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:



DAVID ROSS.

"WHEREAS, Hon. John McBride, for many years the able and faithful representative of our numerous craftsmen, finds it necessary to sever his official relation with our organization, yet holds himself ever ready to use his influence to promote our interests as miners, therefore, be it

*"Resolved,* That as a recognition of his distinguished services, he is hereby declared an honorary member of this organization."

David Ross had been a conspicuous figure in the conventions of miners, both state and national for years. He was by nature modest; although frequently urged to allow his name to be brought before conventions for president of the State organization of Illinois or for president of the United Mine Workers he invariably declined. He was born near Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1861, and emigrated to the United States with his parents in 1868. His means of acquiring an education were very limited, as he was taken to the mines at nine years of age, but by self-imposed study after exhausting toil in his subterranean workshop, he educated himself.

In 1888 Ross was elected a member of the Legislature of Illinois, having laid down his pick to attend his new duties as a statesman. He was instrumental in securing the passage of a number of necessary amendments to the mining laws. His earnestness of manner, his undoubted honesty of purpose, and his knowledge of subterranean labor won the confidence of the Legislature. Friends who recognized his good qualities of head and heart, advised him to take up the study of law. By hard study, which required the burning of the midnight lamp, he passed the examination at the head of his class. He practiced law until 1897, when the governor of Illinois appointed him secretary of the Bureau of Labor, a position he still retains.

In all these years he has never lost interest in the amelioration of his former craftsmen, and still retains his membership in the organization of the United Mine Workers of America. It was mainly through his exertions that the free employment offices were established for the benefit of the unemployed men and women of the State of Illinois. Since the enactment of this law nearly two hundred thousand men and women have been furnished employment.

The annual reports of his department are generally and justly regarded as among the ablest documents issued in the United States, in the field of statistical labor.

The various coal fields of the United States were divided into districts. Where more than one district was formed in one State, the miners of such State were authorized to form a State organization for the management of State affairs. Twenty-one districts were organized as follows:

- Districts — 1. Anthracite, Pennsylvania.  
2. Central, Pennsylvania.  
3. Low Grade, Pennsylvania.  
4. Coke Regions, Pennsylvania.  
5. Pittsburg District, Pennsylvania.  
6 to 10. Ohio.  
11. Indiana.  
12. Illinois.  
13. Iowa.  
14. Missouri and Kansas.  
15. Colorado, Washington and the Territories.  
16. Maryland.  
17. West Virginia.  
18. Virginia.  
19. Tennessee and Kentucky.  
20. Alabama and Georgia.  
21. Texas, Arkansas and the Indian Territory.

The salaries of the officers were: President, \$1,000 per annum; vice president, \$900; secretary-treasurer, \$1,000. Executive board \$3.00 a day and necessary expenses when employed by the president in the interest of the organization. The joint union was named the United Mine Workers of America. A preamble and constitution was adopted. The constitution has been frequently amended; but the preamble stands as it was adopted, and is here given:

“There is no fact more generally known, nor more widely believed, than that without coal there would not have been any such grand achievements, privileges and blessings as those which characterize the nineteenth century civilization, and believing, as we do, that those whose lot it is to daily toil

in the recesses of the earth, mining and putting out this coal which makes these blessings possible, are entitled to a fair and equitable share of the same. Therefore, we have formed "The United Mine Workers" of America, for the purpose of the more readily securing the objects sought, by educating all mine workers in America to realize the necessity of unity of action and purpose, in demanding and securing by lawful means the just fruits of our toil. And we hereby declare to the world that our objects are —

1st. To secure an earning fully compatible with the dangers of our calling and the labor performed.

2d. To establish as speedily as possible, and forever, our right to receive pay, for labor performed, in lawful money and to rid ourselves of the iniquitous system of spending our earnings wherever our employers see fit to designate.

3d. To secure the introduction of any and all well defined and established appliances for the preservation of life, health and limbs of all mine employes.

4th. To reduce to the lowest possible minimum the awful catastrophies which have been sweeping our fellow-craftsmen into untimely graves by the thousands; by securing legislation looking to the most perfect system of ventilation, drainage, etc.

5th. To enforce existing laws; and where none exist, enact, and enforce them; calling for a plentiful supply of suitable timber for supporting the roof, pillars, etc., and to have all working places rendered as free from water and impure air and poisonous gases as possible.

6th. To uncompromisingly demand that eight hours shall constitute a day's work, and that not more than eight hours shall be worked in any one day by any mine worker. The very nature of our employment, shut out from the sunlight and pure air, working by the aid of an artificial light, (in no instance to exceed one-candle power), would in itself, strongly



indicate that, of all men, a coal miner has the most righteous claim to an eight-hour day.

7th. To provide for the education of our children by lawfully prohibiting their employment until they have attained a reasonably satisfactory education, and in every case until they have attained fourteen years of age.

8th. To abrogate all laws which enable coal operators to cheat the miner, under the protection and majesty of the State, to have his coal properly weighed or measured, as the case may be.

9th. To secure, by legislation, weekly payments in lawful money.

10th. To render it impossible, by legislative enactments in every State, (as is now the case in Ohio), for coal operators or corporations to employ Pinkerton detectives or guards or other forces, (except the ordinary forces of the state), to take armed possession of miners in case of strikes or lockouts.

11th. To use all honorable means to maintain peace between ourselves and employers; adjusting all differences, as far as possible, by arbitration and conciliation, that strikes may become unnecessary.

The revenues were to be derived from the local unions of the open wing, and the local assemblies of the secret branch of the United Mine Workers' Union, each member being required to pay direct to the national secretary-treasurer the sum of twenty cents per month, fifteen of which were to be set aside for defense purposes to support members locked out by their employers, or who may be engaged in a strike.

A national convention was to be held annually at such time and place as the preceding convention might determine. Members locked out or engaged in a legalized strike were to receive three and a half dollars per week during the prevalence of the strike, commencing on the second week of idleness. The national executive board was charged with executing the laws enacted at the annual national conventions.



WM. SCAIFE.

William Scaife, who became prominent about this time, was born in England in 1853, and went to work in the mines at the age of twelve years. In the late sixties Scaife joined the Durham Miners' Association as a half member, and at twenty-one was secretary of the local union, and worked hard to build up the Durham miners' organization. In the fall of 1881 he emigrated to the United States, settled in Braidwood, Illinois. Two years later he moved to Coal City, and assisted Dan McLaughlin in organizing a local union of which Scaife was elected one of the officers. From that time on he took an active part in miners' organizations in the United States.

In 1889 Scaife was elected secretary-treasurer of District No. 12 of the National Progressive Union, and earned quite a reputation by the able manner in which he managed a six months' strike in the northern coal field of Illinois. In 1890 he assisted in forming the United Mine Workers of America, and the same year was unanimously elected the state president of the United Mine Workers.

In the fall of 1890 Scaife was elected a member of the legislature of Illinois, and took an active part in securing needed legislation for the miners of the State. In 1891 he was appointed a member of the Illinois mining board. For eight years he was employed in the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics under the Hon. David Ross, chief of the department.

There are a number of bright wide-awake leaders in the State of Illinois who deserve a place in this history, but lack of space makes it impossible to pay them the tribute they merit.



C. F. ROY, MINING ENGINEER.

## CHAPTER XXII.

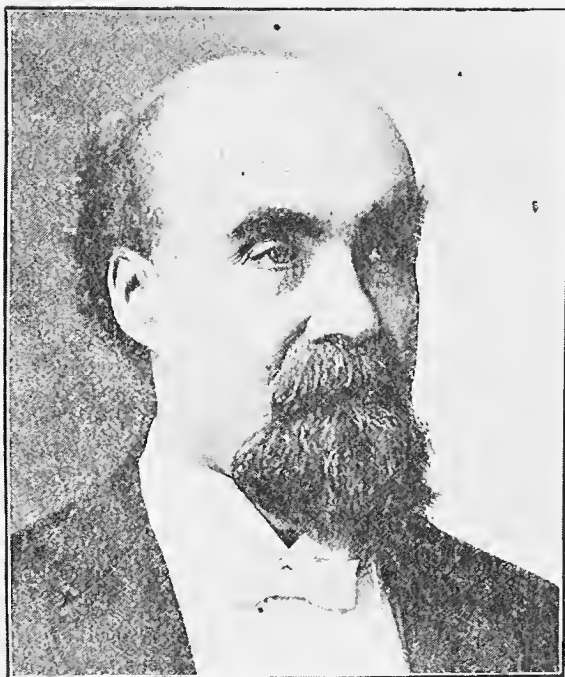
THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA. — FAILURE TO  
SECURE EIGHT-HOUR DAY.

JOHN B. Rae, the first president and master workman of the United Mine Workers of America, was of Scotch birth and education, and had been a miner from early boyhood. Before emigrating to America he had become an enthusiastic adherent of the trades union principle. He was of a religious turn of mind, and was a local preacher when the Knights of Labor began to gather the miners under the shield of the order. He joined one of the assemblies, and soon became prominent in the local circles of the organization.

At the General Assembly of the Knights, which met in Richmond in 1886, the delegates representing the miners advocated and secured permission for the formation of a distinct trades assembly to be composed exclusively of miners, the general assembly believing that such an assembly could not only perform its duty as an educational organization, but could regulate all matters pertaining to the mining craft, better than an open union. Rae became affiliated with this trades assembly, and rose step by step until he was selected master workman.

The first president of the Mine Workers' Union was by nature a cautious man, never taking a forward step until he was sure of the ground. He carried the precepts and example of the man of Galilee into his official duties, striving to heal up the wounds which had been inflicted during the internecine war.

On the 26th of January the national executive board, consisting of John B. Rae, chairman; Robert Watchorn, secre-



JOHN B. RAE.

*First President United Mine Workers of America.*

tary; Patrick McBryde, W. C. Webb, William Scaife, B. F. Warren, and John Kane, met in Columbus, Ohio, to put the machinery of the new organization in working order. The headquarters were established in the Clinton building in Columbus. Phil H. Penna, B. F. Warren, and Peter Wise were appointed national organizers, and George Douglas selected as secretary to the president. In case President Rae should deem it necessary he was authorized to call on John McBride, David Ross, or any other prominent member of the union to do organizing work. President Rae, Secretary

Watchorn, John McBride and Patrick McBryde were directed to prepare a circular letter to the miners of the United States setting forth the objects of the United Mine Workers' Union.

The executive board met four times during the year. At the first meeting the books of the secretary-treasurer were examined and found to be carefully kept, and all monies banked and properly accounted for. The president and secretary were directed to issue an appeal to the miners of the country for voluntary contributions to press the suits against the Wilkesbarre and Dunbar coal companies for damages, on account of the recent mine disasters.

The time of the board was largely taken up with matters of a local character, no less than forty documents having been passed upon. The board adopted a commendable resolution forbidding any local from engaging in a strike without the consent of the president and at least one member of the executive board. The secretary-treasurer was empowered to employ such assistance in his office as he found necessary, subject to the approval of the executive board.

At the second meeting of the executive board, which convened July 15th, the question of an eight-hour day was taken up. This question had been a leading issue with the miners of the country ever since the development of the coal mines, but they had never been able to secure it. Among all the varied industries of the country the miner had the best claim for a shorter working day. He toiled amidst everlasting gloom by the feeble light of his lamp. The atmosphere he breathed in his subterranean workshop was contaminated by mephitic gases, emanating from the coal strata; from the excrementitious deposits of men and animals; from the decaying woodwork of the mine. He often worked in wet and damp situations, which stiffened his limbs, and prostrated his energies.

The general executive board of the Knights of Labor and the general council of the American Federation of Labor had

at their recent sessions adopted resolutions to stand by the miners in case they should make a demand for an eight-hour day. The miners' executive board, supported by these powerful unions, adopted a resolution by an unanimous vote to inaugurate an eight-hour day on the 30th of April, 1891.

The general officers of the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor were at this time engaged in a bitter controversy. The miners' union had but recently emerged from one of these contests and the executive board reminded the officers of the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor, by resolution, that the only rivalry compatible with the responsible positions they occupied was that of advancing the interests of labor, this reminder being inspired by recent dear bought experience.

When the executive board met to complete the preliminary work of the organization and put the machinery in working order there was not a dollar in the treasury. The first tax, which was due in the early part of February, was not sent in until the middle of May. The new organization still maintained its dual character, and there was still a feeling of jealousy, especially among the members of the secret branch, against the members of the open branch; they wanted more light before sending in their dues. When, however, the circular letter was issued from the general office, and distributed in the various mining regions of the country the members of both branches opened their purse strings, and forwarded their levies to the national secretary-treasurer.

As fast as funds were received at the general office organizers were dispatched to the various coal fields of every State and territory to preach the union of hearts and hands for the purpose of building up the greatest organization of workmen of this or any other country. These disciples of the mine workers' union expounded its principles and explained its purposes with the earnestness of men who believed what

they preached. Wherever they went new locals were organized and old ones resurrected.

At the time the Mine Workers' National Union was organized in January, 1890, there were less than 17,000 members in both of the old organizations, the Knights of Labor possessing the larger membership. Before the close of the year the membership had more than doubled; there were fourteen thousand dollars in the national treasury, and the organization owed no man a cent. The bitter feeling which divided the craft had been nearly wiped out, there remaining just enough to inspire emulation without envy.





## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE FARM HILL EXPLOSION.

A SAD accident occurred at the Hill Farm mine, situated in the Connellsville region of Pennsylvania, at 11 o'clock in the forenoon on the 16th of June, 1890. The colliery was operated by the Dunbar Furnace Company, and was located a mile south of the village of Dunbar in Fayette county. The mine was a slope, following the coal in its line of dip; the main entry was double, one heading being used for hauling coal, and the other as a man-way for the ingress and egress of the miners. This accident created a profound sensation all over the country, not because of the number of lives lost, but because of the noble heroism displayed for fifteen days in an unsuccessful struggle, in the midst of imminent peril, to recover the imprisoned miners dead or alive.

On the day of the accident, about sixty men were at work in the mine, one-half of whom were employed on the east side of the main entry, and the other half on the west side. Four thousand feet from the mouth of the slope, a drill hole, eight inches in diameter, had been cut into the coal, a few feet to the left of the main entry, in a depression of the floor of the coal strata. The hole was seven hundred feet in depth, and had been sunk to raise the water of the mine through it by a steam pump. When the drillers withdrew their tools, the hole was full of water. Early in the morning of the fatal catastrophe, John Curran, one of the miners, was directed to cut a passage into the drill hole from the main entry. As his pick struck into the hole, the water burst out in a roaring stream, and ran down the slope along the dip of the coal.

The theory of the accident is, that gas was liberated and followed the water into the mine, and that the fire-damp caught from one of the miners' lamps, and caused a slight explosion, setting the brattice cloth on fire, the brattice cloth in turn setting the wooden brattice and coal pillars on fire.

All the men at work on the east slope were on the intake, and were able to escape before the man-way became filled with the smoke and gas of the fire, although the last man to reach day in safety, was nearly overcome. The miners on the west side of the slope were on the return, and perished — overcome by the gas and smoke while trying to escape.

When the smoke began to emerge from the burning mine, the horror of the situation paralyzed the stoutest heart. The relatives of the imperiled miners ran to the slope, wringing their hands in agony and despair. Two daring men, David Hay and James Shearin, started down the man-way. They met James Gull, the last man to get out with his life; he was nearly overcome with the poisoned atmosphere, and implored them to return. Hay answered, "I have a son down there," and the two brave miners went on to death.

At half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Keighly, the district mine inspector arrived. There was another mine — the Ferguson slope, a mile east of the Farm Hill mine — the workings of which had been holed through into those of the burning mine. A rescuing party, headed by the district mine inspector, Mine Superintendent Hill, Mine Boss Evans, and Hugh Doran, went down the Ferguson slope to try to get around to the imprisoned men, but the suffocating atmosphere was so dense that the effort was abandoned. They penetrated up the man-way some distance, and came upon the dead bodies of Hay and Shearin. The body of Hay was still warm, and an unsuccessful attempt was made to resuscitate it. The gases from the burning fire made the parties sick, and they were obliged to leave the dead men where they found them. After several hours of fruitless but heroic

efforts to reach the entombed men on the right workings, the party returned to day by the Ferguson slope. It was 10 o'clock at night before the rescuers came out, and the gravest fears for their safety had been entertained by the eager multitude outside.

By Tuesday morning, several mine inspectors and a number of mining experts, among them Robert Watchorn, general secretary of the United Mine Workers' National Union, arrived at the ill-fated mine, and a consultation was held in regard to a plan to be adopted for the recovery of the entombed miners. The Cambria Iron Co. had an abandoned mine, known as the Mahoning slope, half a mile west of the Farm Hill slope. Communication had been established between the two mines, but the roof had fallen in and blocked up the passage-way. The former mine boss of the Mahoning mine, Bert Warman, pointed out on the map of the Mahoning mine, a place where communication could be re-established by cutting a passage 400 feet through a fall. Several hundred volunteers declared their readiness to immediately begin work and never cease until the passage-way was made. This plan of reaching the men was adopted.

The work of cutting the passage-way between the two mines was prosecuted with unparalleled energy. The point selected was 2,400 feet down the Mahoning slope. Sentinels were placed along the entry to prevent the eager multitude from passing into the mine and blocking up the entry. A commissary and a hospital were established. Physicians and clergymen were on hand to administer to the sick and emaciated, should any of the entombed men be brought out of the mine alive. The wives, mothers and sisters of the ill-fated men were there, and scanned with eager interest the faces of the rescuers as they came up out of the slope, their grief-stricken countenances betraying the mental anguish they were suffering by that 'hope deferred which maketh the heart sick.'

The entry of communication was made three feet wide and three feet high and only one man could use the pick at a time. Another miner, shovel in hand was ready to throw the debris into the little car as fast as it came from the pick; two men stood ready, rope in hands, to pull the loaded wagon out and replace it with an empty one; and thus the work went on, day and night without ceasing. When the entry-men had penetrated 450 feet through the fall, which they were obliged to timber the whole length of the way, they encountered a solid pillar of coal.

The noble band of rescuers were disappointed, but not discouraged. They at once determined to cut through the pillar. It proved to be 150 feet in thickness, making the whole length of the excavation 710 feet. A drill hole was kept ahead of the pick, in case a body of gas might be encountered in breaking into the old workings. When the drill burst into space, a loud cheer arose in the subterranean cavern of the Mahoning slope, which was heard by the assembled multitude on top, who, divining its meaning, joined in shouts of triumph.

A general consultation was now held to select some determined men to explore the workings where the imprisoned men were confined. A number of rescuers clung to the hope that some of the entombed men might be still living, and there was no lack of volunteers who were ready to undertake the perilous search. Fred Keighly, the district mine inspector; Hugh Doran, the mine boss; Robert Watchorn, the secretary of the Miners' National Union, were selected to explore the mine. Before starting on their dangerous journey, the Rev. Father Mulady, a Catholic priest, who, with heroic devotion, had stood by the rescuers from the first, suggested that the party kneel in prayer. A Protestant divine, Rev. Mr. Hunter, promptly endorsed the suggestion, and so impressive was the scene, that every one present, with one accord, knelt and prayed to the common Father of all,

to vouchsafe His blessing on the perilous journey. There are times when Christianity rises superior to ritualistic forms and church creeds, and this was one of them.

Superintendent Hill, a man of high character and excellent judgment, who had been indefatigable in directing and encouraging the work of rescue, suggested that the explorers take with them a number of clothes-lines and stretch them along the line of travel to serve as a guide on the return journey. Creeping through the narrow tunnel, the explorers found themselves in the workings of the Farm Hill mine. The tunnel served as an intake, a stream of fresh air being drawn through it into the Farm Hill workings, which drove out the gases and replaced them with a respirable atmosphere.

Pursuing their way over several falls of roof, one of which was so high that there was hardly space to crawl over it, the intrepid explorers, after a long effort to locate the working places of the imprisoned miners, came into one of their rooms. They found a partly loaded car with a shovel by its side, and a number of picks in place. "This," cried Doran, "is Jack Mitchell's room;" but Jack could not be found. The rescuers then, under the leadership of the bank boss, went to a division of the mine where he supposed the miners would retreat. With quickened pulse and bated breath, they examined the place, but not a miner, living or dead, was there. Doran then suggested that they had sought refuge at the foot of the slope. On the way to the slope, they found two dinner buckets and two blouses. one of the buckets was unopened; the other was open, a piece of bread was lying by it with a bite taken out. "This is Pat Devlin's bucket," said Doran. He had been eating his dinner when he became alarmed, and ran to his death while flying for his life. A little further along, they came upon a mule hitched and harnessed to a trip of loaded cars. The mule was dead, partly decomposed and bloated in an extraordinary manner. The stench from the dead mule was unbearable, and the three

adventurers, who had been provided by the prudent forethought of Dr. Mullen before entering the mine with cloths saturated with spirits of camphor, were obliged to apply it to their mouths and nostrils. To escape the stench of the dead mule, they ran into a body of smoke and gas, which dimmed the feeble light of their safety lamps, and they made a break for fresh air. Doran, who knew every foot of the mine workings, brought the party back to the place where they had left the rope, guided by the stench of the aforementioned mule. Discouraged and exhausted, they returned to the Mahoning slope, through the low and narrow tunnel, bringing with them the two dinner buckets and two blouses.

A meeting of the whole rescuing force was called hastily, and the three explorers reported that in their judgment, the men were all dead, and that it would be impossible to recover their bodies until the mine fire was extinguished. The sense of the meeting was taken, and it was decided to abandon the search. The heavy-hearted rescuers who had for sixteen days, worked, watched, waited and prayed, separated after tendering Father Mulady and Robert Watchorn, a vote of thanks for their noble and disinterested labors.

Watchorn, on his return to Columbus, was presented with a gold watch by the executive board of the United Mine Workers of America for the part he had taken in the attempted rescue. It bears the seal of the United Mine Workers on one side and an inscription on the other, that it was given for heroic services as their representative at Dunbar, June 16, 1890. The author wrote Mr. Watchorn, requesting him to furnish the evidence and the names of the men who especially distinguished themselves at Dunbar, and I quote his answer:

"You have asked me to mention the names of the conspicuously brave among the rescuers. You could not have given me a more difficult task. If you will write to the Dunbar Furnace Company, and get the names of all who were paid

off July 2, 1890, for the work in connection with the catastrophe, and label them all heroes, you cannot go far astray."

Robert Watchorn, who so heroically assisted in the work of rescue, was born in Derbyshire, England, in 1858, and went to work in the coal mines of his native country at the age of ten years, finding employment as a trapper boy. He joined the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Miners' Union in 1872. At the age of twenty-one, Watchorn emigrated to the United States, and found employment in the mines of Pennsylvania, and again attended night school. Here he joined the Knights of Labor, and took his first lessons in debate in a local assembly of that order, and was for several years its secretary.

In 1888 he was elected president of the Pittsburg division of National Trades Assembly No. 135, Knights of Labor, and in the same year was elected secretary-treasurer of National Trades Assembly No. 135, and two years later, when N. T. A. 135 K. of L. and the N. P. U. consolidated, and became the United Mine Workers of America, he was elected secretary and treasurer, and secretary of its national executive board. In March, 1891, he was appointed chief clerk to the governor of Pennsylvania, and the following July, was appointed by the governor as chief factory inspector of Pennsylvania, a position he filled for four years. In 1895, he was appointed United States immigrant inspector, and in 1898, was sent by the United States government to investigate the sources and causes of the pauper immigration to the United States. In 1899, he was promoted to the office of special immigrant inspector, and in 1900, was sent to Roumania and the Balkan States to investigate the cause of the exodus of the Roumanian Jews to the United States.

Watchorn has been twice promoted since his return from Roumania. He is at present Commissioner of Emigration, and his services to the National Government have been invaluable in preventing the emigrants of foreign nations who are

excluded by law from landing in the United States seaports.

Watchorn still retains his membership in a local of the United Mine Workers' Union of Pennsylvania, and is an honorary member of the United Mine Workers — this honor having been conferred by unanimous vote of the national

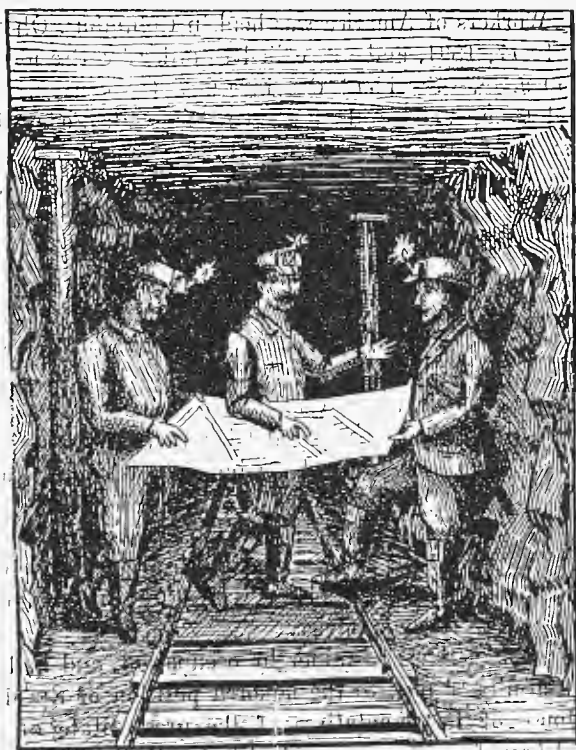


ROBERT WATCHORN.

convention, on his resigning the office of secretary-treasurer in January, 1891. He has never in his life tasted intoxicating drink, nor used tobacco in any form. He attended night school in England and the United States, in all fourteen years, and is a man of wide information, broad-minded, a



fluent speaker, and of extraordinary energy of character. His whole career is an inspiration to miners, and illustrates the fact that it is not the steep and thorny path, but the slippery one that holds the workingman down.



SURVEYING THE MINE.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION. — MAMMOTH MINE  
EXPLOSION.

THE second annual convention of the United Mine Workers of America was held in Columbus, Ohio, February 10-17, 1891, and was called to order by President Rae at 9:30 a. m. President Rae informed the convention that Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor; and Secretary-Treasurer Hayes, Hugh Cavanaugh, W. F. and A. W. Wright, members of the executive board of the Knights of Labor were in the city, and he appointed a committee to wait on these gentlemen and invite them to address the convention.

President Rae, in introducing the visitors, explained the relations between the United Mine Worker and the two great labor organizations which the visitors represented. Messrs. Gompers, W. Wright and Cavanaugh addressed the convention on the subject of organized labor and its purposes.

An invitation was extended, during the sittings of the convention to Governor James A. Campbell, and Speaker N. R. Hysell to address the convention. The distinguished visitors were escorted to the platform amidst the cheers of the delegates. Both made speeches, giving the miners' representatives some wholesome advice.

Speaker Hysell was a miner by occupation, and had risen from the miners' pick to the honored position of Speaker of the House of Representatives of the great State of Ohio. He had been for many years identified with the State organization of the miners of Ohio, and was at the time of his election to a seat in the House of Representatives, vice-presi-

dent of the state union. At the conclusion of **Speaker Hysell's** address, the Hon. John McBride, late president of the Miners' Protective Union, was called on to address the convention.

President Rae in his annual address said in part:

"The past year has been one of the most eventful in the history of miners' organizations in this country. We started out on comparatively new and untried ground. It was a bold step, not without some risk, yet so full of promise as to justify our fondest hopes. And although we feel that we have only begun building what we fully expect to be, the greatest organization of wage-workers in America, yet the work done makes us feel thankful, and incites us to renewed effort and fresh courage."

He recommended that the convention make provision for the establishment of a trade newspaper to be owned and controlled by the organization, through which the questions affecting the well-being of the craft could be discussed. He commended the work of the national executive board, whose labors during the past year had conduced to make the work of the general officers so great a success. He closed the address with the following excellent advice:

"Neither personal friendship, sectarian pride, nor desire for supremacy in counsels should govern us in actions and decisions. The best methods to bring about the best results and the most effective agencies available should receive our support.

The report of Secretary-Treasurer Watchorn was replete with interest and encouragement. Referring to the work of the year he said:

"We went forth penniless — not a dollar at our command — to perform the prodigious tasks assigned the national organization. Our faith never faltered and every expense for nearly one whole quarter we cheerfully bore in anticipation of the triumph which we firmly believed would come.

"Established as we were on the sound principles of self-defense and self-preservation we knew no such word as fail! At the end of the first quarter our hopes were realized, our enemies disquieted, our cause triumphant. Thousands of men who had never enjoyed the blessings and privileges under the wing of our union, while those of our forces who have vainly endeavored for years to secure improved conditions have succeeded in a greater measure than in any period of their lives."

Secretary-Treasurer Watchorn, equally with President Ray, recommended the establishment of an official newspaper to be owned and controlled by the organization. He recommended that in the establishment of an official organ, provision be made that every subscriber who might be killed in the pursuit of his calling should be entitled to a hundred dollars, to be paid to the heirs-at-law of the deceased. The paper would educate the miner while living, and relieve the awful distress which is too often bequeathed to the helpless widow and children by his death. The recommendation, it would seem, was not acted upon in the establishment of the *United Mine Workers' Journal*. It is not too late to take up the matter. The United Mine Workers' Union is now the most powerful organization of workingmen in the world. And it has come to stay as long as a ton of coal shall be mined in the United States. The miners might with justice be called the fathers of the trades union principle in this country. Watchorn's recommendation is still worthy of the most serious consideration of the United Mine Workers of America.

The following officers were elected:

John B. Rae, re-elected president by acclamation.

Phil H. Penna, elected vice-president.

Patrick McBryde, elected secretary-treasurer.

W. B. Wilson, elected member executive board.

John Kane, elected member executive board.

W. C. Webb, elected member executive board.

John Nugent, elected member of executive board.

After the adjournment of the convention a délégation of mine workers went to Pittsburg to meet a committee of operators from the competitive mining fields to consider a mining scale for the ensuing year, and the adoption of the eight-hour day.

After some discussion of the scale question, President Rae stated to the operators that the question of a shorter working day should be taken up before the scale, as it was of more importance than any question which would come up before the conference. Before taking up the eight-hour day the operators asked for a recess.

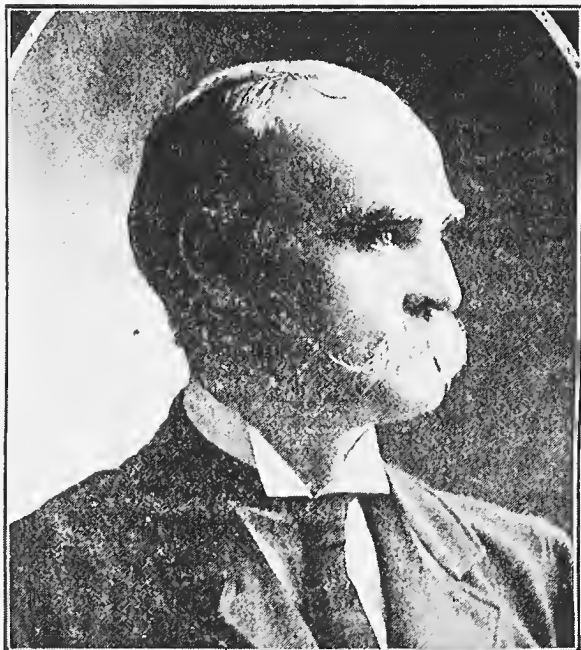
When the conference met again the question was promptly taken up. The speeches of the delegates were confined to thirty minutes. Mr. Penna, on behalf of the miners, made an earnest appeal for the adoption of the eight-hour day, and closed his remarks with the apt quotation:

“Whether we work by the day or work by the piece,

With a reduction of hours the wages increase.”

Mr. Robbins, speaking for the operators said that they would not allow the miners to dictate how many hours they would run their mines. Mr. W. P. Rend, however, favored granting the miners an eight-hour day. He said: “I believe the time is coming when eight hours will prevail all over the globe. Postpone the discussion as you may, I believe it will be adopted in time in all mechanical trades. I stand here before you favoring eight hours. All my colleagues are against me, and but for my efforts would have refused to discuss the matter.”

Rend proposed as a compromise the adoption of nine hours for the year, and if the plan worked satisfactorily, then move for an eight-hour day next spring, adding “that if the miners and operators split on this question the annual interstate agreement is at an end. He would regard the disruption



PATRICK M BRIDE.

of the annual scale as a calamity. It had stopped strikes and lockouts in the past."

The question was fully and ably discussed by both parties in interest. Secretary McBryde making a strong appeal which could not be answered. The operators, with the exception of W. P. Rend, seemed to have come to the convention to fight the eight-hour movement to a finish. Finding that it was to no purpose to insist further that the eight-hour day be granted, the miners moved that the scale be taken up and disposed of. On this question, equally with that of the eight-hour day, the operators declined to make any advances in settlement of the matter.

The miners' representatives having failed to secure an eight-hour day and the annual scale, were left without an anchor by which to hold their tumultuous constituencies in line. As a consequence local strikes broke out in every coal region in the United States, and entailed ten-fold greater losses to the mining operators, than the concession of the eight-hour day or the adoption of the scale would have done.

Another dreadful explosion occurred at the Mammoth mine of the Frick Coal and Coke Co., in the Connellsville region of Pennsylvania, on the 27th of January, 1891. The mine was opened in 1875, and had been bought by the Frick Coal and Coke Co., a year before the accident occurred.

The catastrophe took place at 9 o'clock in the forenoon in the workings on the right of the main entry, where the great majority of the miners were employed. The force of the explosion shook the ground overlying the subterranean excavations, and threw a vast cloud of smoke and dust high in the air, sending a thrill of horror through the hearts of the workmen on the top of the shaft. The news of the accident flew over the neighborhood, and soon hundreds of people were collecting around the top of the ill-fated pit. The managers were promptly on the ground, and scores of brave, noble-hearted men volunteered to descend the shaft to search for the unfortunate miners. Sixteen miners who were working on the left side of the main entry, beyond the reach of the blast, as soon as they heard the noise of the burning fire-damp, made a rush for the bottom of the pit before the after-damp spread to that part of the workings, and reached day in safety.

When the first corps of rescuers descended into the pit, they encountered a fall of slate in the main entry, against which a number of wrecked mine cars were piled in utter confusion. After clearing away the debris, an advance was made into the interior, in the region of the explosion. Dead men were encountered in all directions. The fierce flames

of the fire-damp and the insidious lung poison of the after-damp had done their work — not a living creature had been spared, except the sixteen men who had escaped before the rescuers entered the mine. Some of the dead were horribly mutilated, the unfortunate victims of the explosion having been raised off their feet by the force of the blast and dashed against the pillars of the mine; others were terribly burned by the fire-damp; but the majority had died a painless death from inhaling the surcharged atmosphere, the product of the explosion. One man, who had fallen asleep in death from inhaling the insidious after-damp, had been on his knees in prayer when overcome; his hands were clasped together, his eyes upturned. The search was kept up all day and all night, and by morning, all of the victims of the explosion, one hundred and six in number, had been recovered.

The scenes around the pit mouth as the dead were sent to the surface, beggars description. The friends of the dead miners were overcome with uncontrollable grief. Loud lamentations filled the air as the bodies were sent to the surface, and were scanned by the stricken relatives, for husbands, fathers, or brothers. An empty house, the property of the company, was improvised for a morgue, and the work of preparing the dead for burial, went on all night, the glare from the miners' lamps throwing a weird shadow over the heart-rending scene. Clergymen and physicians had promptly and nobly volunteered their services for the spiritual benefit of the soul, and the physical care of the body, but the cruel hand of death had not spared a living soul. The undertaker alone was in demand in the terrible calamity.

The Frick Coal and Coke Company appropriated \$25,000 for the relief of the unfortunate families, and also provided for the decent interment of the dead miners. The Knights of Pythias, who have numerous lodges in the Connellsville region, took great interest in raising funds for the relief of the stricken widows and orphans, and the powerful organiza-



tion of the United Mine Workers came promptly forward, to their assistance.

The Mammoth mine was supposed by the responsible officers of the Frick Coal and Coke Company to be free from the presence of fire-damp, and the explosion came upon them like a thunder-clap in a cloudless sky. On the morning of the catastrophe, the fire-boss made the following report of the workings:

MAMMOTH MINE, January 27, 1891.

"GENERAL MANAGER LYNCH:

"This is to certify that the undersigned has this day (January 27, 1891), examined the working places in the Mammoth mine of the H. C. Frick Coal and Coke Company, and find the same to be in a safe condition for the miners and other workmen employed.

"WILLIAM SNAITH, Fire Boss."

A great deal of discussion occurred after this explosion in regard to the cause of it; and the ever-ready excuse was offered by the management of the mine: "A sudden outburst of gas." In this connection the following quotation from the report of Mr. Lionel Brough, one of the most intelligent of the British mine inspectors, throws valuable light on the cause and prevention of fire-damp explosions:

"I avail myself of this opportunity to say that after great explosions, sudden outbursts of gas are often suggested as the cause of the calamity; again, doors left open, tobacco smoking, lamps tampered with—anything in fact except the true cause—insufficient ventilation. It matters but little which may be the prevailing danger—fire-damp or black-damp—thorough searching ventilation, never neglected, will sweep both or either speedily away."

Two days after this calamity, the general officers of the United Mine Workers visited the mine, and drew up the following appeal to the governor and legislature of Pennsylvania:

*"To His Excellency, Robert E. Patterson, Governor; and the Honorable, the Senate and House of Representatives, of Pennsylvania, Greeting:*

"Standing as we do, by the open graves of our brothers, whose lives have been suddenly and violently taken in the frightful Mammoth disaster, our hearts bleeding and torn while we witness the interment of our recent comrades, we hear the orphans' wail, and the widow's despairing cry; and feeling our helplessness most keenly, we appeal to you to come to our aid. Many kind offers of aid have been made, and to all the generous souls who responded, we feel deeply grateful. While we appreciate the timely succor which comes with true American promptness and generosity, we are fully conscious that kindness and liberality on the part of a charitable public is not all that is necessary. We accept these offerings most gladly; but we appeal to your Excellency, and to the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives to come to our aid and throw around our craftsmen the strong protecting arm of the great Keystone State. 'Prevention is better than cure' is an old maxim, and we believe that it was never more truthfully illustrated than in our case. Over 150,000 of our brothers daily enter the respective mines of the State.

"In addition to the hardships incident to working underground the miners are in many instances in constant danger of meeting the same fate that last Tuesday shocked the entire country. Many of the mines of this region are exceptionally dangerous; and as the workings are extended, the dangers are multiplied. The present methods to protect life and property are altogether inadequate, and frequently unreliable. The defects in our mining laws make it difficult to locate responsibility; and it is to be feared that a certain amount of carelessness is the result. In this hour of our great sorrow, face to face with the danger and misery to which our crafts-

men are exposed, we invoke protection for the helpless and the suffering.

JOHN B. RAE,  
Mas. Workman and Prest.  
ROBERT WATCHORN,  
Secretary and Treasurer.  
PETER WISE,  
United Mine Workers.  
C. M. PARKER,  
United Mine Workers."

The day following the dreadful accident, the Legislature passed a joint resolution providing for the appointment by the governor, of a special commission to visit the ill-fated mine and searchingly investigate the cause of the explosion. The Legislature also made provision for the appointment by the governor of two separate commissions, one for the bituminous, and the other for the anthracite mines of the state, to consist of eight practical miners, eight mining operators, and eight mine inspectors for each commission, to frame new mining bills for each of these coal fields.

The mine inspectors were expected to act as a balance between the operators and the miners, and to a great extent that expectation was fulfilled, the only difference being that the operators who were employers of men, were always in a position to grant little favors, while the miners had no favors at their disposal. Some of the mine inspectors were influenced by that circumstance, but to their credit be it said, most of them acted in accordance with what they believed to be the best interests of those engaged in mining. The miners on the commission proposed that the mines should be ventilated by a system of air splits.

The system of splitting the ventilating current was adopted and a compromise made on sixty-five persons to each division. The mining law required one hundred feet of air per minute for each person employed in the mine. The miners' repre-

representatives contending for an amendment making the quantity two hundred cubic feet per minute; a compromise was eventually agreed to on one hundred and fifty feet per minute. The amendment was strongly, almost bitterly opposed by those operators whose mines did not generate fire-damp. They insisted that mines which did not generate inflammable air did not require more than one hundred cubic feet of air to make them safe. The contention of the miners was that while explosions did not occur in mines generating carbonic oxide (white-damp) and carbonic acid (black damp) yet the insidious effects of those gases destroyed more men by the slow process of miners' asthma than were injured or killed by explosions, the great difference being that by explosions a number were killed at a time, and the community horrified by it; while the killing process, through the agency of the other gases mentioned, did not attract public attention because men were not destroyed suddenly. Black-damp being much heavier than air, required a strong current to remove it, while fire-damp being much lighter than air, could be easily removed if the air current was carried to reach it. A clause was inserted requiring that the stoppings between the main intake and main return airways be built of masonry, laid in cement or mortar.

In the definition of terms, adopted as part of the proposed law, the mine foreman was declared to be the agent of the operator, having charge of all the inside workings of the mine. At the conclusion of the work of the commission, the report was signed by the eight mine inspectors and the eight miners. The miners on the commission conceded a number of points while the bill was being formulated which they would not have conceded but for the hope of getting a unanimous report. The operators not only refused to sign it but sent a lobby to Harrisburg to secure the defeat of the measure. W. B. Wilson was selected by the mine inspectors and miners to go to Harrisburg and endeavor

to have the Legislature adopt the report. There was little difficulty in inducing the lower house to pass the measure, but it was held up in the Senate committee on mines and mining, of which Mr. Thomson, from Dauphin county, an anthracite coal operator and attorney, was chairman, and was reported too late for the Senate to take action upon it.

In the session of 1893, the bill was again introduced. A lobby of operators, headed by W. P. DeArmitt, Alexander Dempster, of Pittsburg, and Winfield Scott Nearing of Morris Run, went before the mine committee to oppose the bill. A conference was held between the operators present and John A. Cairnes, James White, James Sweeny, and others representing the miners, at which a modification of the report of the commission was agreed to, and the operators withdrew their opposition when the modified bill was adopted by the Legislature and signed by the governor. The important modifications made were the removal of the clause making mine foremen the agents of the operators, the abolition of the section requiring main stoppings to be built of masonry laid in cement or mortar, and the amendment of the article on ventilation that mines not generating fire-damp were only required to have one hundred cubic feet of air per minute for each person employed.

A number of accidents of a similar character to this catastrophe, but less destructive to life, had occurred from time to time in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. During the early part of the same year in which the Dunbar explosion occurred, the South Wilkesbarre shaft exploded, killing a number of miners, whose bodies had not yet been recovered. The Legislature, as already stated, made provision for a commission of anthracite mining experts, similar to the soft coal commission, which formulated a bill for the better protection of the lives and safety of the hard coal miners, which was promptly enacted into a law.

The appointment of the mine inspectors by the governor, has never commanded the approval of the miners of the anthracite field. An act was passed in June, 1901, making provision for the nomination and election of these officers by ballot, under the general laws of the commonwealth, the first election to take place in November, 1902. All candidates to be eligible for nomination, must be examined by, and pass a board of examiners, and receive a certificate of competency; otherwise the election would be illegal and void. The operation and results of this law will be watched with great interest by the miners in every coal field of the United States, who generally and justly complain that the office of mine inspector, originally created in the interest of the subterranean population, has been prostituted to political purposes, the inspector too often being selected not by reason of special fitness for the position, but because of supposed influence as a professional politician, or as a reward for party services.

The receipts and expenditures of the new organization for the year ending December 31, 1890, as shown by the books of Secretary-Treasurer Robert Watchorn, were as follows:

Receipts — General Fund .....	\$13,732 47
Receipts — Defense Fund .....	35,181 29

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Total.....	\$48,913 76
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Expenditures — General Fund.....	\$13,602 57
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Expenditures — Defense Fund .....	19,967 11
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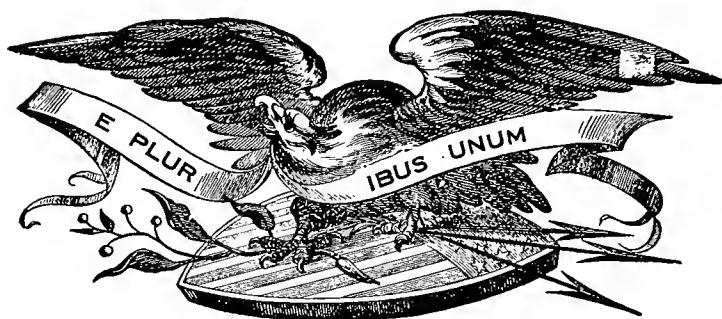
Total.....	33,569 68
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Balance on hand Dec. 31, 1891.....	\$15,344 08
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The expenditures had been incurred in payment of officers' salaries, including salaries and expenses of the members of the executive board; telegrams; stationery; printing; postage; supplies for locals, and the incidental expenses of the office.

Nearly twenty thousand dollars had been expended in conducting a number of strikes — a costly luxury.

The organizers who had been sent out to preach the gospel of united effort had done good work. During the year one hundred and sixteen new locals had been added in about equal number from the two branches of the union. The bitter feeling which rent the two unions while they had separate and independent organizations, had in great measure disappeared.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## THE CONNELLSVILLE STRIKE.

THE Union furnace, erected on Dunbar Creek in Fayette county, in 1791, was the first furnace to use coke in what is now the Connellsville coke region. Cannon balls used by General Jackson, at the Battle of New Orleans, were cast at this pioneer furnace. After General Arthur S. Clair was removed from the governorship of the South-Western Territory, he moved to this region and built a fine home for those early days. He erected the Hermitage furnace on Mill Creek, two miles east of Ligonier, in Westmoreland county, hoping by this venture to retrieve his fortune, which he had lost during the Revolutionary War; but the enterprise proved a failure; he lost all he had, and died in poverty at the age of eighty-four, in a little log cabin on Chestnut Ridge mountain.

M. M. Cochran was the father of the coke industry of the Connellsville region. In 1843 he built two boats on the Youghhegheny river, which he loaded with coke and shipped by river to Cincinnati. He found considerable difficulty in disposing of the coke, but finally induced Miles Greenwood, the principal iron manufacturer of the Queen City of the west, to make a test of it. Greenwood was agreeably surprised at its wonderful heating power, and the ease with which it melted the pig iron. He bought both boat-loads, and told Cochran to go home and send him all the coke he could make.

The development of the coke industry of this region has been phenomenal. It now furnishes employment to 30,000



men, the leading company being the H. C. Frick Coke Co. When the strike of 1891 was inaugurated this company owned and operated forty mines, nine thousand coke ovens, and gave employment to nearly ten thousand men.

In the Connellsville region the National Mine Workers possessed a large membership, the great majority of which belonged to the secret wing of the organization. The rate of wages was not satisfactory to the miners, and they were restless. In the first week of February, 1891, the representatives of the Connellsville coke miners met the committee of the operators to discuss the wage question. A suspension for ten days was agreed on to allow the delegates to attend the annual convention which was to meet in Columbus on the ninth of the month. The Connellsville delegation laid their grievances before the convention, which promised to stand by the coke workers, in case the companies declined to accede to an advance in wages. The delegates were, however, advised not to precipitate a strike until after the first of May, the date on which a general demand was to be made by all the miners of the United States for the inauguration of the eight-hour day.

Early in March, however, a conflict was precipitated by the operators, who, without consulting the miners' officials, posted up notices to the effect that a reduction of wages had become necessary, and that mining employes would be required to work nine hours a day for the next three years. The miners struck, and demanded the eight-hour day as a condition of returning to work. This sudden and unexpected turn of the affairs of the Connellsville miners and operators disarranged the plans of the National Union. President Rae, Secretary McBryde and other officials visited the Connellsville region and endeavored to effect an honorable compromise: and would have succeeded but for the stubborn folly of a number of local leaders. Mr. Lynch, the general manager of the Frick Coal and Coke Company, became exasperated with the home

delegates and broke off all negotiations looking to a compromise, and declared his purpose to fight the strike to a finish.

In this perplexity President Rae sent for Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor. This formidable labor union, together with the Knights of Labor, which was still strong in numbers and influence, had promised the miners to stand by them in case the mining operators declined to concede the eight-hour day on the ensuing first of May. President Rae stated the situation in the Connellsville coke region to the chief of the American Federation and implored him to recognize the strike as the first step taken by the miners to enforce the eight-hour day. Gompers peremptorily declined to change the date for the inauguration of the movement. This decision practically cut the miners' union off from receiving assistance from the American Federation in support of the Connellsville strike.

The National Organization supported the suspension with funds from its own treasury, and the strike went on, neither of the combatants exhibiting any disposition to give up the fight. The national executive board issued a circular letter to the miners of the United States appealing for voluntary contributions to help the strikers, and the appeal was not made in vain.

The majority of the Connellsville coke and mine workers were Slavs, Huns and Poles, and until this suspension occurred, were regarded by the American miners as a servile people, ready to accept any wages their employers would offer, and do the bidding of the mine bosses and superintendents, without question. But during the strike they displayed the haughty and fiery spirit of the Anglo-Saxon race. Their stubborn and enduring fight incensed the mining operators, who as a last resort to break the strike, threw the foreigners out of the company houses, by due process of law. They resisted the sheriff and his deputies and several of the Slavs were shot. Even the Slav women showed fight, shaking their

fists in the faces of the sheriff's deputies, as these officials performed their disagreeable duty.

During the strike the state militia was called out. A riot occurred at Moorwood and a number of the strikers were killed. The strike was lost when this condition of affairs was reached. The financial resources of the National Union were in a wretched condition when the end came, and as the mining companies made it a condition of re-employment that the miners should abandon the union, the National Organization lost sixteen thousand members.

In accordance with the recommendation of the committee of ways and means at the last national convention, the national executive board purchased the necessary outfit from the funds of the treasury to establish an official newspaper, to be known as the *United Mine Workers' Journal*. The first number of the paper was issued from the general office, April 16th, 1891. It was a six-column paper of eight pages, and presented a very neat and handsome appearance. It introduced itself to public favor in an ably prepared valedictory, the following extract being the opening paragraph:

"In accordance with the desire of the United Mine Workers of America, expressed through their delegates at the recent convention in Columbus, the *United Mine Workers' Journal* introduces itself to the public, and especially to those whose interests it will guard and foster, and whose patronage it expects. The *Journal* makes its appearance in response to a long-felt want — that of a fearless advocate devoted exclusively to the interests of the mine workers. It will be dauntless and earnest without catering to either the selfish prejudices or passions; truthful in its presentation of facts and figures; open and fair in discussion."

The annual subscription price of the *Journal* was placed at a dollar and a half, but was soon reduced to a dollar. The paper was edited temporarily by a practical printer until a

miner of intelligence and education, tact and judgment, could be selected to take charge of it.

The editorial mantle fell on the shoulders of John Kane. He was of English birth and had been a miner from early boyhood, and was largely a self-taught man. He had been a devoted adherent to the trades union principle all his life and when called to the editorial chair was a member of the national executive board of the United Mine Workers of America. For many years he had been an earnest student of these economic questions which gave birth and development to the labor movement in the United States, and was thoroughly equipped for the work assigned him. Under his editorial management the paper took and held high rank among the ably edited trades union papers of the United States.

Kane was fair and courteous in statement, able and dignified in discussion, writing up to the intelligence of his readers and endeavored to represent the best thought of the miners. He never catered to the prejudices of the hot-headed men, who sometimes get to the front and lead the miners to wreck and ruin. He was vice-president of the National Union, when he died, at the early age of thirty-eight years. No man in the ranks of organized labor was ever followed to his grave by more sincere mourners. The United Mine Workers of America erected a monument to his memory.

When the question of owning and controlling a trade paper came up for discussion in the national convention there was considerable opposition manifested, not on account of its necessity, but because of the gratitude the miners owed to a number of trade papers which had stood by them in all their conflicts with their employers. Notably among these was the *National Labor Tribune* of Pittsburg, which from the first day of its publication had been the steadfast friend of the mine workers of the United States.

The *National Labor Tribune* was founded by Thomas A. Armstrong of Pittsburg in 1874. Armstrong devoted his life to the amelioration of labor, was prominent in labor circles and was the Greenback candidate for governor of Pennsylvania, when the public mind demanded that a greenback dollar should be made equivalent in purchasing power to a dollar in gold. He died universally respected by the working-men of America, who erected a monument to his memory.

In addition to the *National Labor Tribune*, the *Trades Journal* of Pittsburg, the *Scottsdale Independent*, the *Houtsdale Advance*, the *Wage Earners' Journal*, the *Massillon Independent*, the *Lonaconing Review*, the *Spring Valley Gazette*, the *Blossburg Advertiser*, the *Alabama Sentinel*, and a number of other papers had done valiant service for the miners. The consensus of opinion, however, was that there could not be too many labor papers published; that there was work for all to do; and that the condition of the mine workers of America had made it an imperative necessity for the organization to own and control its own journal.

On the 17th of April a Committee of the United Mine Workers, consisting of John B. Rae, Patrick McBryde, John P. Jones and John Nugent issued an address to the miners of the United States, reviewing the mining situation, and describing the failure of the miners' delegates to secure any concessions from the operators. The miners were ordered to strike on the first of May to enforce the eight-hour day. The order was not favorably received by the miners, either organized or unorganized; and the national executive board and district presidents were summoned to headquarters for consultation.

The situation was carefully gone over in its aggregate and in its parts. The advices from the various coal fields showed that the miners were divided in opinion touching the propriety of a strike at this time. Under such circumstances it

was believed that the strike would be a failure. Another circular letter was prepared and issued by the committee countermanding the strike order.

The movement for the eight-hour day had been a chapter of accidents. The premature strike of the Connellsville district; the obstinacy of the local leaders to accept a compromise; the failure of the Federation of Labor to endorse the strike; the apathy of the miners themselves, presented to the general officers no alternative but to order a precipitate retreat.

The vacillating policy pursued by the general officers, in dealing with the eight-hour movement, greatly weakened the influence of President Rae among the miners of the country. The miners of Iowa paid no attention to the circular letter countermanding the strike order. On the first of May they made a demand on their employers for an eight-hour day. The operators declined to concede it, and the miners struck. A number of the companies granted the eight-hour demand as a result.

At the close of the fiscal year the books of the secretary-treasurer showed that although \$42,000 had been expended for defense purposes, and \$10,000 for officers' and organizers' salaries, the organization had \$6,595 in the treasury. The following statement gives the income and expenditures from February 17, 1891, to January 31, 1892:

#### INCOME.

Rec'd from Robert Watchorn.....	\$17,570 33
General Income .....	10,226 91
Income from sale of supplies.....	1,055 75
Income from defense fund.....	31,902 37
Miscellaneous .....	3,121 75
Income from M. W. Journal.....	6,748 67

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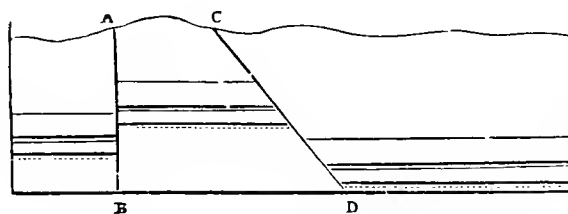
Total.....	\$70,025 78
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EXPENDITURES.

Officers' and organizers' salaries.....	\$10,137 14
Officers' expenses .....	1,575 21
For defense purposes .....	42,158 25
Expended miscellaneous fund .....	2,957 12
United Mine Workers' Journal....	6,602 66

Total.....	<u>\$63,430 38</u>
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Balance on hand Jan. 31, 1892.....	<u>\$ 6,595 40</u>
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DISLOCATION OF STRATA.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

GOVERNOR M'KINLEY ADDRESSES THE CONVENTION. — THE FAIRMOUNT STRIKE. — COAL CREEK STRIKE. — PANIC OF 1893. — THE SUSPENSION OF 1894.

**T**HE Third annual convention of the United Mine Workers met in Druid Hall, Columbus, Ohio, February 9, 1902. President Rae informed the delegates that Governor McKinley would address the convention. Two delegates were appointed to wait on the governor and escort him into the hall. The governor addressed the convention as follows:

“Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention:— I have run away a moment from my official duties to give you greeting and to welcome you, the representatives of the miners of the United States, to the State capital of Ohio. There is nothing too good for you in Ohio. We feel honored and grateful to have you in our midst today — the representatives of the most important interest in this the greatest iron producing country in the world. Your product furnishes the motive power which creates the great wealth of our country. There is coal mined in twenty-five states of the union. The coal area is three hundred thousand square miles; the entire area of the world is four hundred thousand, so that we represent three-fourths of the whole.

“In 1850 we mined seven million, two hundred and twenty-five thousand tons of coal. 1880 we mined seventy-one million tons of coal. Last year our product had reached over a hundred million tons. We have zinc and lead, gold and silver and nickel, and although it was once said that we had no tin in this country — that it all came from Great Britain





GOVERNOR WILLIAM M'KINLEY, AFTERWARDS PRESIDENT OF UNITED STATES.

or the straits of Mallaca, yet it has been found in the Dakotas, California and in two or more of the southern states. The more tin we manufacture the more coal will be used; the more men wanted to mine it, and more wages will be paid.

"We have everything in this country; like the sign in the variety shops, 'anything you don't see, just call for it.' It is a great industry you represent; and the third State in coal

production in the United States bids you welcome. I am glad to meet you this morning, but will not detain you in the business which has called you together."

John B. Rae declined to be a candidate for re-election to the office of president of the organization, and was elected an honorary member. The following officers were elected: John McBride, president; Phil H. Pena, vice-president; Patrick McBryde, secretary-treasurer.

Immediately after the adjournment of the third convention, President McBride addressed circular letters to the operators of the competitive States making inquiry whether they were willing to meet the miners' representatives in a joint conference, to formulate an annual scale of wages to govern the year. The replies of the mining companies were not promising. They claimed that, owing to the downward tendency of the market they could not see their way clear to enter into an annual agreement at the present time.

Failing to secure a joint convention, McBride was successful in bringing the miners and operators together in each of the States composing the competitive field. Separate conventions were held between the miners and operators of Ohio, at which a scale was agreed on. At the joint meeting of the Pittsburg miners and operators there was a great deal of friction which had to be overcome before the two interests could reach an understanding. In Indiana the organization was weak, and non-union miners indifferent. The operators took advantage of the situation to propose a reduction, but the prevailing scale rates were finally adopted. In the Pittsburg district of Kentucky, and the Jellico district of Tennessee, partial settlements were made. In the State of Illinois there was scarcely the skeleton of the organization left, and nothing was accomplished.

The year 1892 was remarkable for its freedom from strikes. There were several skirmishes but only two battles. The

first occurred at Fairmont, West Virginia; the second at Coal Creek, Tennessee.

In the Fairmont district the organization had but recently obtained a firm foothold, and the miners, who had not yet become disciplined in its ethics, rushed into the strike without notifying the general office, the miners having made a demand for higher wages, which the companies declined to grant. The leaders called on the national organization for financial assistance. An investigation into the merits of the suspension by order of the national executive board, discovered that neither the market conditions, nor the wages paid in competing districts, warranted a demand for an advance, and President McBride ordered the strikers back to work.

The operators, taking advantage of their triumph, discharged the strike leaders, and declined to recognize the national union, holding it responsible for the strike. The miners made it a condition of abandoning the strike that the discharged men be reinstated, and in this contention received and deserved the countenance of the national executive board. The companies would not permit the leaders to return to work, and the men renewed the strike.

The strikers, although lacking in both discipline and experience, made a gallant fight. They were finally defeated, and were required to renounce allegiance to the union.

The strike in Tennessee was organized against the convict system. Ever since the opening of the mines in Tennessee and Alabama convicts had been leased out to the coal companies at so much per head, their labor coming into direct competition with that of free labor. The miners had long made a fruitless effort to rid themselves of this incubus. They now determined to try conclusions in a strike. New hands were brought to supersede the strikers, and the militia was called out. The mountaineers of Tennessee, who are utterly brave, got out their fighting tools and clashed with

the militia. Many of the strikers were arrested, tried and convicted for rioting.

These Tennessee miners did not belong to the Mine Workers' Union, but they received and deserved the sympathy and assistance of the national organization. The American Federation of Labor donated five hundred dollars for the defense of the men who in their zeal to rid themselves from association with criminals had transgressed the law.

Toward the close of the year there was a revival of business and when the fourth annual convention met President McBride advised the delegates to demand an advance of five cents per ton, stating that market conditions warranted the demand, but that concert of action, and a bold front were necessary to secure it. The operators declined to concede the five cents, counting on the indifference and lack of organization among the miners, and the demand fell dead.

President McBride and his advisers felt keenly the difficulties of leadership during the financial crisis of 1893. To lead the craft into a strike was to kick against the pricks. The radical element, who knew how to pull down, but not how to build up, opened the vials of their wrath on the devoted heads of the general officers, and they did after their kind.

Reduction after reduction trod upon each other's heels, so fast they followed. In the Pittsburg district the rate of mining fell from seventy-nine to fifty cents or less. There was not half work for the toiling masses in any of the trades. Many of the mining operators found it so difficult to make collections that they were obliged to pay their employes in ninety day notes, bearing interest at six per cent. In the Hocking Valley of Ohio, the operators were suffering so severely from the competition of the Pittsburg district that they appealed to the officials of the United Mine Workers for relief. A state convention of the miners of Ohio was called

in the early part of the year, and a fifty cent rate of mining was established in the Hocking Valley.

President McBride favored a series of national suspensions for the purpose of depleting the overstocked markets, and placing the trade in a more active condition. It was believed that such a policy would strengthen prices, prevent the possibility of future reductions, and ultimately result in increased wages.

It was proposed that a demand be made at the next annual convention for the restoration of the scale of prices and conditions of employment which prevailed at the beginning of the year as a basis for the suspension. The suspension was to continue until the point of endurance was reached, when work was to be resumed to allow the strikers to recuperate, whether any concession had been secured or not. After the miners had recovered sufficiently to enable them to sustain another suspension, it was to be authorized by the national officials, and conducted as the first one had been. These tactics were to be duplicated until the objects sought had been attained. This policy met the approval of the general officers, state and national, and found favor with the rank and file. The vast army of half idle mine workers, whether organized or not, were ready to try conclusions with their employers in a general suspension, in the confident hope of depleting the glutted coal markets, and raising the price of coal.

When, therefore, the fifth annual convention met, the delegates came with their minds made up, and when President McBride called for a report of the delegates touching the proposed suspension, James Murray, from Spring Valley, Illinois, sprang to his feet, and exclaimed: "All delegates in favor of a national suspension, stand up." Every man arose. Cheer after cheer resounded through the vast hall, and it was some time before order could be restored.

The committee on resolutions reported the following:

*"Resolved, That on and after Sunday noon, April 21, 1894, no coal shall be mined in that part of the United States and territories governed by our organization, until such times as our general officers, and national executive board, shall order the miners to resume work.*

*"Resolved, That we declare it to be the purpose of the general suspension to restore the scale of prices and conditions of employment which prevailed at the beginning of the year."*

Another praise-worthy resolution was adopted, which toward the close of the strike was more honored in the breach than the observance:

*"WHEREAS, We believe that the interests of our organization can be best subserved, and the purpose we seek to accomplish, through a general suspension of mining, can be more easily obtained by a full and complete observance of law and the maintenance of peace and protection of property.*

*"Resolved, That we pledge ourselves, and call upon our members to enforce the suspension of mining by peaceful methods, and that should it become necessary at any time we promise to voluntarily assist in the work of protecting life and property wherever threatened."*

At the hour appointed upwards of a hundred thousand men and boys laid down their tools. The general officers were surprised at the magnitude of the strike, and were filled with confidence and hope that it would be of short duration, and result in triumph.

This confidence was encouraged by the action of many of the operators affected, who volunteered to give the advance demanded, provided that in case the suspension should prove a failure, the miners given the advance would consent to a reduction corresponding to the wages paid when the strike was inaugurated. The general officers would not agree to the proposition, believing that it would demoralize the

strikers, and defeat the strike. None were to resume work until all resumed.

Letters and telegrams were sent in to the general office making inquiry whether coal might be loaded at local mines to supply rolling mills, brickworks and locomotives. McBride answered "that where companies wanted engines run, or water hauled, or timbering or other repair work done, it would be permitted, provided the increase demanded be paid.

The suspension was placed in charge of the executive board by the convention, but at the request of President McBride, the district presidents were added. On the 27th of April the first of a series of bulletins was issued from the general office, for the information of the strikers. It stated that a careful estimate of the miners who had obeyed the order of suspension was fully a hundred thousand, and gave the districts where the order to suspend had been respected and obeyed. The second bulletin, issued on the 30th of April, placed the number at a hundred and sixty thousand, and stated that not more than twenty-four thousand miners were working in the whole of the bituminous coal fields of the United States. The prediction was made in this bulletin that if the strikers remained firm and stood shoulder to shoulder in the fight "it would not be long until there will not be coal enough left in the general market to boil a kettle, and a complete victory will be yours."

When this statement was given out there was warrant for the confidence. The market was being rapidly depleted, and at several points in the country the cry was being raised that a coal famine was staring the people in the face. The anthracite operators and those of West Virginia, however, came to the rescue and poured in coal to the threatened markets. These companies reaped a rich harvest during the suspension.

The *United Mine Workers' Journal* lent its powerful influence to the cause of the suspension. Such pointed

paragraphs as the following appeared weekly in its columns. "This is the American miners' turn." "We are the producers of the fuel of a continent." "There is nothing within reason impossible to compact union."

When the order was issued declaring a general suspension, the officers of the National Union were painfully conscious that it could not be of long duration. The mass of the mine workers had not been working half time for a year and had consumed their scant earnings as fast as they made them. The organization had no funds to support the strike. Victory or defeat must soon end the conflict unless an honorable compromise could be secured in the interval.

President McBride opened up a correspondence with the operators of the competitive field, and secured their approval for a joint convention of operators and miners to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, on the 15th of May. He notified the Mine Workers' Union to send delegates to the convention, who were instructed to meet on the 14th by themselves to formulate a plan of action before meeting the operators. In a circular calling the convention he stated that the ranks of the strikers were as firm as ever, and had been materially increased by the miners of Coal Creek, Tennessee, and at many other places in Kentucky, Missouri and West Virginia; that Iowa had declared for a general suspension, and that many of the operators had offered the scale price.

Upward of two hundred delegates, representing central Pennsylvania, the coke regions of that state, Maryland, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Colorado, and the Indian Nation attended the convention. One delegate from each State was selected to act as a preliminary committee to formulate a scale. When the work of the convention was finished the delegates adjourned to meet the operators in joint convention.



The operators who attended the convention were "like angels' visits, few and far between." At their preliminary meeting, the delegates from the Pittsburg district, led by F. L. Robbins, favored meeting the miners in joint convention for the purpose of formulating a scale; others, led by W. P. DeArmitt, opposed having anything to do with the miners' union; yet a number of them attended the joint convention—not for the purpose of approving any action which might be taken, but to protest against an agreement being made.

When the joint convention met, an Indiana operator offered a resolution, to the effect that the operators of his State would not respect any scale which might be agreed on by the joint convention, unless a scale was adopted covering the central and southern fields of the State of Illinois. The western Pennsylvania operators notified the convention that they would not be bound by any scale adopted. A number of the operators' delegates, were, however, amenable to reason, and made an earnest effort to bring the suspension to a close by an honorable compromise. They proposed a sixty-five cent rate for the Pittsburg district and a fifty-six cent rate for the Hocking Valley. The proposition was discussed for two days, without reaching an agreement, and the joint convention ended in smoke. After adjournment the miners' delegates met by themselves, and passed a resolution to place the question of a settlement of the strike in the hands of the national executive board and the district presidents.

Meanwhile vast train-loads of coal from the anthracite fields of Pennsylvania, the New River and Pocahontas fields of West and Old Virginia, (whose miners had not suspended work) were being poured into the markets, which the suspension had been inaugurated to deplete. The strikers were living on a crust of bread and a glass of water, and their bare-footed children were crying with hunger. Angry threats were made to burn the bridges which spanned the

rivers, over which the imported coal was being transported. The resolution enacted at the national convention, pledging the organization to peaceful methods, and promising voluntary assistance to protect life and property wherever threatened, had no influence over these despairing men.

Under the interstate commerce act it became the duty of the general government to protect the bridges which cross rivers dividing the States. Alarmed by the threats of the strikers the president of the United States was appealed to for protection of the bridges. President Cleveland acted swiftly. The danger of lawlessness was so alarming in other parts of the striking coal fields that the militia was called out in four states.

President McBride and his advisers were not slow to realize that it was now a question of a short time when the strike would fly to pieces, and that the only proper thing to do was to make the best settlement possible with the coal companies while they were yet in a condition to make any terms at all.

On the 9th of June a meeting of the executive board and State presidents was called to meet in Columbus, to which the operators were invited — the operators having expressed themselves at the Cleveland convention as ready and willing to meet the miners' representatives from their respective districts at any time for the adjustment of mining rates.

After a careful and thorough discussion of the question at issue between the representatives of both interests the following scale was agreed on, and a general order was issued to the miners to return to work.

	Per Ton.
Pittsburg, thin vein .....	\$0 69
Pittsburg, thick vein .....	60
Hocking Valley ....	60
Indiana (bituminous) ....	60
Indiana (block) .....	70
Streator, Ill (summer) ...	62½

Streator, Ill. (winter) .....	70
Wilmington, Ill (summer) .....	77½
Wilmington, Ill (winter) .....	85
LaSalle, Ill. (summer) .....	72
LaSalle, Ill. (winter) .....	80
Spring Valley, Ill. (summer).....	72½
Spring Valley, Ill. (winter) .....	80

"At other fields of Illinois the prices to be relative to the above. Coal in the Pittsburg district going east to tide-water shall pay the same mining price as that paid by the Pennsylvania and Westmoreland Coal Company. This scale of prices shall be in effect and bind both parties thereto, beginning June 18th, and continuing till May 1, 1895, subject to the following provision: Provided, that the above named scale of prices for the Pittsburg district shall be generally recognized.

"It is further provided that operators and miners shall co-operate in their efforts to secure a general observance of scale prices named for said district; and if, during the period covered by this agreement, a general recognition of the prices named herein for said district cannot be secured, either party to this agreement may call a meeting of the joint board of arbitration to convene at such time and place as those having authority may elect; and said joint board when so called shall meet and determine if able, whether the agreement has been sufficiently respected and complied with to warrant its continuance to the date named therein. If the board is unable to agree the members thereof shall elect a disinterested man whose decision shall be final.

"If it be found and decided by process above provided that it is being substantially respected it shall remain in force and bind both parties thereto for the period stipulated herein, but if found and decided by same process not to be so generally observed as to warrant its continuance it shall be abro-

gated and both parties thereto absolved from contract obligations herein set forth.

"Whenever miners desire they shall be permitted to select and place on the tippie a check-weighman of their own selection.

"Wages shall be paid on the above scale semi-monthly, and all balances due on pay day shall be paid in cash.

"An interstate board of arbitration and conciliation, consisting of four miners and four operators shall determine upon any equality complained of as between the different fields named in the above schedule of prices."

Signed on behalf of the miners by: John McBride, Patrick McBryde, John A. Cairnes, Cameron Miller, Joseph Dunkerly, Phil. H. Penna.

On behalf of the operators: J. S. Morton, Francis L. Robbins, J. Smith Tally, Walter S. Bogle, E. T. Bent, H. C. Chapman, M. H. Taylor, A. L. Sweet.

Before the expiration of McBride's third term he was elected president of the American Federation of Labor, and resigned the presidency of the United Mine Workers of America to assume his new duties. Vice-President Phil H. Penna was selected to fill the unexpired term.

Both as president of the state organization of Ohio, of the National Progressive Union, and of the United Mine Workers of America, John McBride had done the miners of the United States invaluable service, and displayed leadership of a high order. His one great fault was his devotion to politics. His political friends courted his friendship, and induced him to use his influence with the miners in favor of policies which the majority of them detested. He made few converts but many enemies. Politics and trades unionism cannot be made to harmonize in the United States. Every movement of this character has proved an utter failure, and has wrecked a number of trades unions. To hold the industrial masses together in politics a purely labor organization

is necessary, and the present labor movement will in time develop into such an organization. The aggregation of aggregated capital can be checked by no other means. The labor movement will go on until the leveling of class distinctions is complete. John Mitchell or some other wise and able leader of the industrial masses may be president of the United States before the close of the first quarter of the present century. And why not?

The miners movement in the United States has developed a number of able men, competent to manage the national organization, or shine in the halls of congress, such as P. H. Donnelly, Wm. H. Crawford, W. D. Van Horn, W. H. Haskins, Cameron Miller, and a hundred others, but space in this volume is too limited to include sketches of their work.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

FAILURE TO RESTORE THE ANNUAL JOINT AGREEMENT.  
STATE AGREEMENTS MADE.

WHEN the sixth annual convention met in Columbus, Ohio, February 12, 1895, Ex-President John McBride was present and read his report covering that part of the year of his administration before he resigned the presidency to accept the presidency of the American Federation of Labor. He reviewed the history of the suspension, and defended himself from the charges which had been circulated impeaching his honor in calling off the suspension. He declared that he had performed his duty as he understood it.

Two charges were preferred against him, one by Mark Wild that McBride had given him \$600.00 to settle the strike of the American Railway Union; the other by A. A. Adams that corruption on the part of the national officers had been used in the settlement of the suspension. He was acquitted of both charges.

When the convention adjourned there was a general feeling among the delegates that the interstate conferences, which had worked so satisfactorily to both employers and miners, until the panic of 1893 set in and demoralized the trade, were to be revived. President Penna opened a correspondence with the leading operators in the competitive fields for the purpose of securing their consent to meet the miners' representatives in Pittsburg to formulate an annual scale.

In the first week in April an informal meeting of a few of the leading operators, consisting of Messrs. Bent and Sweet of Illinois, Talley and Broughton of Indiana, and Morton

and Johnston of Ohio, met the officials of the National Organization, and the President of the Ohio State Union, to consider the question of calling a joint convention.

It developed at this meeting that the Pittsburg operators would not send delegates to any joint convention which might be called, and that any scale which might be adopted by a joint convention which did not include the Pittsburg district, would not be respected by the operators in other coal fields. The operators present said that they were willing to meet the miners' representatives in Pittsburg to agree on a scale of wages for the year—provided the operators of the Pittsburg district would join in the movement, but not otherwise.

President Penna and Secretary-Treasurer McBryde wired the operators of the Pittsburg district to ascertain whether they would join other operators in joint convention to make a scale. F. L. Robbins, chairman of the association, answered that inasmuch as a combination existed among Ohio coal operators for the purpose of standing by each other to maintain the differential of nine cents per ton, the operators of the Pittsburg district would decline to become a party to any joint conference of miners and operators until the differential was abolished. This answer was decisive. The Pittsburg operators were too important a factor to be ignored. The matter was dropped for a time.

On the 21st of May President Penna issued an official call to the organized miners of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia to send delegates to a convention of the United Mine Workers of America to meet in the city of Columbus, on Wednesday, May 29th, to consider the present status of the mining situation.

Sixty-one delegates responded, fifty-one of which were from the state of Ohio; six from Indiana; one from Illinois; one from Pennsylvania. President Penna addressed the delegates and explained the situation, stating that there was



PHIL. H. PENNA.

considerable pressure being brought to bear on the National officers of the organization to bring about a general suspension similar to that of 1894 as a means of restoring the interstate joint agreement, and the scale of 1892. He doubted the wisdom of such a course; but if the convention, the delegates of which had come direct from the mines, thought that a suspension would secure these results, and should vote for it, he would acquiesce in the decision, and labor with all



his ability to make the strike a success. The delegates were, however, too few in number to legislate on so important a matter.

There were no funds in the national treasury; the officers had to borrow money to live on, and pay the running expenses of the organization. The union scarcely held eleven thousand members together, of which seven thousand belonged to the state of Ohio.

President Penna turned his attention to the Pittsburg district, and succeeded by the perseverance of his character in securing an advance from fifty-nine to sixty-four cents per ton. On the 1st of October, the day the advance was to take effect, all the operators of the district conceded it, except the Cleveland Gas and Coal Company and one or two others. On the 10th a district joint convention of the Pittsburg miners and operators was called for the purpose of establishing uniform conditions, and a uniform price for producing coal.

The convention reached an agreement and provided a penalty which was to be visited on all violators of the contract, whether operators or miners. But notwithstanding the penalty a number of operators in the scramble for trade, violated both the letter and spirit of the contract, and the organization was unable to enforce obedience to the agreement.

On December 1st another joint convention was called to meet in the Pittsburg district at which a conditional scale was adopted, providing for an advance of six cents per ton, to go into effect on the first of March, 1896, the condition being that in case the Cleveland Gas and Coal Company was not paying the advance on that date the price then obtaining at the mines of this company should be the one all would be required to pay. A committee of five operators and five miners was appointed at the convention to enforce the conditional scale and adjust all disputes as they might arise.

On the first of March the committee made a report of exist-ist conditions in the district, showing that ninety-seven per cent. of the companies were complying with the advance. The Cleveland Gas and Coal Company, which had raised the mining rate to sixty-four cents per ton, reduced it ten cents. The joint committee made overtures to DeArmitt with the object of establishing a true uniformity rate and succeeded in making a contract to that effect, but it was neither respected nor obeyed.

When the sixth annual convention adjourned the delegates returned to their homes feeling that the annual state conference would be revived. But the attempt of the general officers to bring about a joint meeting of operators and miners had proved a failure. The state agreements had not worked satisfactorily, the contracts being set aside when the self-interest of a number of operators stood in the way. As a result the miners became greatly demoralized and great numbers withdrew from the National Union. Toward the close of the year times had somewhat improved; a slight increase in wages had been secured; the abolition of the company stores had in some cases been brought about; and in other cases a promise had been given that the system would be given up.

When the seventh annual convention met hope had revived, and President Penna in addressing the convention spoke words of comfort and encouragement to the delegates; all felt that the National Union had a bright future before it. President Penna was re-elected by acclamation.

Soon after adjournment the miners of Indiana called a State convention to consider a proposed reduction of five cents per ton. The convention declined to accept the cut, and struck. The national officers were not consulted in the inauguration of this strike, and President Penna, had his counsel been asked, would have disapproved of it, on the ground that it was certain to end in failure, and necessarily

to injure the national organization, which was still suffering from the wounds received in the suspension of 1894.

After the strike had so far progressed that defeat by starvation was staring the strikers in the face, the officials of the State organization appealed to the National Union for assistance, stating that their funds had become exhausted. President Penna replied that the exchequer of the National Union was in such a wretched condition that aid was impossible; that owing to the severe depression of the coal trade the miners of the country were not making more than a bare living, and that if he were to issue a circular from the general office soliciting assistance, it would not, in his opinion, bring in money enough to pay for printing and mailing it. He, however, favored the selection of accredited delegates of the National Union to be selected by the Indiana miners to canvass the various mining fields of the country to solicit subscriptions for continuing the strike. But notwithstanding the unfavorable outlook, and the inability of the National Union to provide financial assistance, the strike was kept up for six long months. The courage, but not the judgment of the Indiana miners commands our admiration in this contest.

The Pittsburg agreement made in December, 1895, to cover the year 1896 was made with the understanding that it must be observed by all the mining companies, and especially by the Cleveland Gas and Coal Company, to be binding on any. This company declined to comply with the scale.

During the month of July the operators demanded that the organization insist that the Cleveland Gas and Coal Company, which was only paying forty-five cents per ton, be made to respect the scale price, or they would reduce the mining rate to the level of that company. President Penna now put forth all his strength to induce the DeArmitt people to pay the sixty cent rate, but failed.

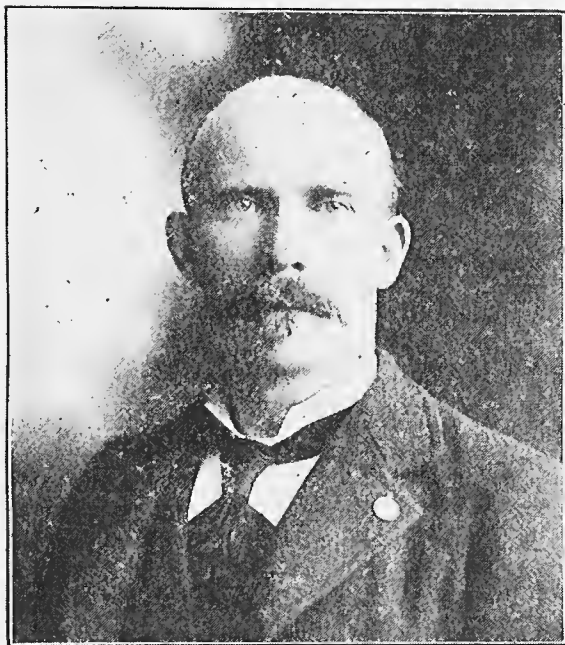
A convention of the organized miners of the Pittsburg district was called to consider the situation. The convention,

in accordance with the joint agreement, declared by resolution that all operators should be treated alike and it reduced the price of mining all over the district to forty-five cents — the price paid by the Cleveland Gas and Coal Company.

This voluntary lowering of wages was without a parallel in the history of the organization, and raised a storm of indignation among the unorganized miners affected by the cut. Abuse and calumny were heaped upon the heads of the miners' officials, which became intensified by the declaration of several of the companies that the reduction was uncalled for — that the operators were able to pay the sixty cents. The union miners affected by the reduction accepted it reluctantly, but loyally.

The miners' officials displayed a high sense of honor in thus voluntarily reducing the scale rate in accordance with the letter and spirit of the joint agreement, which stands out in bold relief to the action of the operators on a similar occasion, who violated the joint contract, during the darkest hour of the panic, when they offered the miners the alternative of a reduction of wages or they would close down the mines. The United Mine Workers of America has been held up to the public as an irresponsible organization, but it must in justice be said that it has loyally fulfilled every obligation it has ever made with the mining operators; and that the mining companies, which are responsible in law for all contracts, did when trade conditions bore heavily upon them by reason of a sudden and unexpected slump in prices, reduce wages in the face of an annual contract, mutually made and entered into in joint convention.

The president of the Pittsburg district was Patrick Dolan. He was born in Scotland in 1858, and went to work in the mines of his native country when he was nine years of age, and became a half member of the local union of the Coatbridge district at the age of twelve years. In 1886 Dolan emigrated with his family to the United States, settling at



PATRICK DOLAN.

McDonald, Pennsylvania, where he found work at the Jumbo mine, and allied himself with one of the locals of National District No. 135 of the Knights of Labor, composed exclusively of miners. Soon afterward he moved to Reissing and worked for W. P. Rend. He assisted in organizing an assembly of the Knights at that place of which he became master workman, and held this position in the assembly until the formation of the United Mine Workers of America in January, 1890.

In January, 1896, Dolan was elected president of District No. 5, the Pittsburg district of Pennsylvania. In 1897 he was elected a member of the national executive board. He

has been twice a delegate to conventions of the American Federation of Labor as a representative of the United Mine Workers of America.

Dolan had been all his life an enthusiastic advocate of the trades union principle, as a means not only of establishing a breakwater against the encroachments of capital, but for the amelioration of the industrial masses. He was a conspicuous figure in the annual conventions of the United Mine Workers' Union, until the National Convention of 1906, when he lost the confidence of the miners and was removed from office.

The miners of Ohio were working under the agreement made in December, 1895, on the nine-cent differential. The price of mining was to advance or decline in Ohio, in accordance with the fluctuations of the rates paid in the Pittsburg district, and when the reduction of forty-five cents was made in that district the Ohio operators proposed a reduction to correspond with the Pittsburg cut. A state convention of Ohio miners was called early in October to consider the proposition. The concensus of opinion was that as the agreement had been disregarded with impunity several times during the year by both miners and operators, it was no longer binding on either party. This view was held by the general officers of the state union also. The question was referred to the miners themselves to be voted on, who accepted the reduction, with the exception of Jackson county, the miners of which organized a foolish strike on their own behalf, which lasted four months and ended in defeat.

The miners of Illinois were comparatively quiet during the year. The great strike of 1894 had severely injured the National Union in that State. But there was still left the old guard, which rose superior to misfortune, and which sooner than surrender the principle of workmen's organizations would die on the spot. There were several local strikes in the prairie state during the year, the more notable

of which was the one in the northern part of the state caused by the operators enlarging the screens.

Many plans were advanced by political philosophers among the miners to restore wages to the scale conditions existing before the panic set in. The restriction of the output was a favorite remedy. The depressed condition of the trade had already restricted the output to a point where there was no money in the business for the operators nor living wages for the miners. The proper general policy for the organization to pursue was to avoid strikes, which cannot succeed during a period of business depression; but to hold the organization together, await the revival of business, and then demand advances in wages corresponding to the advance of coal in the market.

A wise labor leader will avoid a strike on a falling market, or during a period of great business depression, no matter what clamor his action may raise, or what adverse criticism it may provoke.

When the eighth annual convention met President Penna declined to allow his name to be used in connection with the election for the presidency of the organization for the ensuing year. In closing his annual address to the convention he said:

"In now returning to you the charge with which you intrusted me, and in retiring from active participation in the affairs of the organization — a retirement made necessary by reason of domestic relations and duties — I do so with more or less regret. I shall carry with me into private life recollections of conflicts, victories and defeats; recollections of true friendship and kindness, as well as those of an opposite character; and while I could not if I would obliterate them from my mind, I shall never as long as memory performs its functions, forget the treatment received; nothing shall be remembered in malice. I shall carry with me through

life wherever my lot may lead a consciousness of duty well done as it appeared to me."

The report of the secretary-treasurer showed the following financial condition of the organization:

INCOME.

April 1 to June 1, 1897, by tax.....	\$8,655 60
Supplies .....	244 70
Journal .....	2,105 25
Miscellaneous .....	262 50
Balance on hand April 7, 1896.....	166 40
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Total.....	\$11,434 45

EXPENDITURES.

Salaries and expenses .....	\$7,967 54
Supplies .....	1,601 28
Office expenses .....	562 21
Telegrams, postage, etc., .....	484 20
Miscellaneous .....	296 29
Total.....	\$10,851 52
<hr/>	
Balance on hand.....	\$582 93

The following general officers were elected for the ensuing year: M. D. Ratchford, president; John Kane, vice-president; W. C. Pierce, secretary-treasurer.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## THE STRIKE OF 1897.

MICHAEL D. RATCHFORD was born in Clare, Ireland, in 1860, and emigrated to the United States with his parents, in his twelfth year, the family settling in Stark county, Ohio. A year later young Ratchford found work in the mines near Massillon, and in 1873, when only thirteen years of age, became a member of the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association.

The miners of Stark county, under the leadership of John Pollock, were solidly united, and young Ratchford, who was an intelligent boy, soon developed an unswerving attachment to the principles of workingmen's organizations. In 1880 he joined the local assembly of the Knights of Labor at North Lawrence and remained a member of the Knights until the National Trades Assembly and the National Protective Union joined forces as the United Mine Workers of America.

In 1890 Ratchford was elected president of the Massillon sub-district of the National Union. In 1892 he was appointed a national organizer, and later in the same year was elected to fill a vacancy on the national executive board. In 1895 he was elected president of the United Mine Workers of Ohio, and was re-elected to the same position in 1896.

His administration of the state organization, which was very successful, brought him into prominence with the miners' leaders all over the United States, and paved the way for his election to the presidency of the United Mine Workers at the eighth national convention held in Columbus, Ohio, January, 1897.

The features of Ratchford's administration were the great strike inaugurated on the fourth of July, 1897, which after an enforced idleness of twelve weeks resulted in the triumph of the miners; the revival of the interstate methods of formulating an annual wage scale between the miners and operators; and the establishment of the eight-hour work-day.



M. D. RATCHFORD.

When President Ratchford assumed direction of the affairs of the United Mine Workers, the organization had become reduced to a mere skeleton. The panic of 1893, which had not yet spent its force, had borne heavily on the fortunes of the National Union. The average paid-up membership for the year 1897 was less than ten thousand; wages had gone down notwithstanding the heroic efforts of McBride and Penna to maintain the Pittsburg scale.

Thousands of families were bordering on starvation. The papers published in the various coal fields mentioned cases

of children of miners driving dogs away from refused bread, which had been thrown out, and eating it voraciously. Hundreds of families in the various mining districts of the country were forced by necessity to appeal for charity because the monthly earnings were not sufficient to hold body and soul together. So serious had matters become that the governor of Ohio directed the state board of arbitration to investigate the condition of the miners of the state.

The operators were not making any money owing to the depressed condition of the trade, and the consequent low price for coal. In March, 1897, the executive board of the United Mine Workers issued an appeal in a circular form to the American public protesting against the treatment of American workingmen, by the DeArmitt Company. The time was not opportune to make the fight, but the national organization kept up the agitation until fair conditions were conceded.

At the annual convention which elected Ratchford, president, the following resolutions looking to an advance in wages, were unanimously adopted:

*“Resolved*, That the price per ton for pick mining shall be sixty-nine cents in Pennsylvania; sixty cents in the Hocking Valley; sixty cents in Indiana; fifty cents in the Grape Creek district, and the mining rate of 1894 for the balance of Illinois.

*“Resolved*, That the price per ton for loading, drilling and shooting after machines in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois, be three-fifths of the pick mining rate, and the price per ton for cutting, drilling and loading machine coal in Indiana, shall be of the picked four-fifths rate in Indiana, and the price for all other machine work shall advance in proportion.

*“Resolved*, That the time when the scale shall go into effect shall be left with the national executive board and the district presidents.”

Owing to the depressed condition of the coal trade, no immediate action was taken on the resolutions.

The delegates had scarcely reached home before coal took a tumble in the market; as a result the operators in the Pittsburg district reduced the price of mining to forty-seven cents per ton. Corresponding reductions were made in Indiana and Northern Illinois. The operators of Ohio called the officers of the state union to a conference for securing a reduction in that state. Ratchford protested against these reductions, and appealed to the generosity of the operators not to further reduce wages, when the miners, their wives, and children were suffering for the common necessities of life.

The miners of the Pittsburg district, angered at the cut in wages, threatened to strike. Ratchford urged them to continue working, reminding them that a local strike must inevitably result in failure. He, at the same time, advised them to prepare for a general strike.

The situation was perilous. Ratchford wished to call a meeting of the executive board and district presidents, but owing to the wretched condition of the exchequer he was without money to pay the necessary traveling expenses to the national headquarters. On the 7th of June he sent a circular letter to each member of the board and State presidents setting forth the condition of the trade and asking for instruction as to the policy they desired him to pursue, and informing them that there were no funds in the treasury to call them together. The answers to the circular letter not being satisfactory, the board and State presidents were summoned to meet at the national headquarters on the 26th of June, at their own expense.

The board was in session two days, and carefully considered all the conditions confronting the craft. On the lake trade there was considerable activity. Business men in all the walks of life were feeling hopeful that the backbone of the

panic had at last been broken, and that business would soon resume its normal activity, with a tendency toward upward prices. After profoundly meditating over the situation, the executive board and State presidents resolved to order a general strike along the whole line, to go into effect on the morning of the Fourth of July.

The proposition to bring the miners out at such a time, was a bold and startling one. The organization had no money with which to sustain a long strike; the miners had nothing laid up for a rainy day—the protracted panic having eaten up all their previous savings. Trade conditions, although a little hopeful, were still severely depressed. The coal operators, equally with the general public, were startled with the foolhardiness of the proposition and ridiculed the idea of the miners stopping work. One hundred and fifty thousand miners, acting largely from a feeling of despair, obeyed the strike order, however.

The miners of Maryland, Kentucky, West Virginia, Southern Illinois, the New York and Cleveland Gas and Coal Co., and a large portion of Central Pennsylvania, continued working. The coal from these States, which came in active competition with the coal of the striking fields, determined the strike leaders to use all peaceful means to induce these miners to suspend work. To this end a number of able and determined organizers were dispatched to the mines of the New York and Cleveland Gas and Coal Company, and to other fields. The miners of the DeArmitt Coal Company were recent immigrants, ignorant of our language and our laws. DeArmitt, who hated the trades unions, had employed the foreigners, and had taken advantage of their ignorance by requiring them as a condition of employment to sign an iron-clad contract, binding them to remain in the employ of the company for a year, unless they could give satisfactory reasons for leaving sooner; and forbidding them to join a miners' union or to engage in a strike under penalty of

forfeiting all money due at the time. The contract also required them to work for ten cents per ton less than other miners of the district. Such high-handed and un-American methods of hiring workmen naturally excited the determined hostility of the United Mine Workers.

The organizers who were sent to the DeArmitt mines, were soon reinforced by large delegations, which formed camps on the company's ground, to which they gave such names as "Camp Determination," "Camp Despair," "Camp Desolation," etc. They held mass meetings, secured the attendance of the men at work and explained the purpose of their visit through an interpreter, and the foreign miners, in large numbers, joined the strikers.

To check the work of the organizers, the DeArmitt people got out injunctions prohibiting the visiting miners from holding meetings on the company's grounds. Some unknown party shipped beer and whisky into the camp by the harrel, which at Ratchford's order, was spilled in the ditches. In applying for the injunction the claim was made that the presence of the strikers in the neighborhood of the mines, endangered the company's property. The governor of Pennsylvania was appealed to for troops to preserve order. A number of the leading strikers were arrested. President Ratchford, by circular letters and by personal appeal, urged the miners on no account to render themselves liable to arrest, but to be peaceable and orderly on all occasions.

A number of attempts had formerly been made by the National Federation of Miners and the National Protective Union, to organize the West Virginia miners, but with indifferent success. A number of aggressive organizers, simultaneously with the movement to bring out the DeArmitt miners in Pennsylvania, were dispatched to the mining districts of the little mountain State to induce the miners to join the strike. The courts, at the instance of the coal companies, as in Pennsylvania, issued injunctions forbidding

the strikers from trespassing on the companies' properties; but notwithstanding the terrors of the injunctions, meetings were held and many of the miners suspended work. Angered at the success of the organizers, the coal companies caused two hundred of the strikers to be arrested for contempt of court; twenty-seven of whom were thrown into prison. The strike leaders appealed to the governor, demanding the constitutional right of free speech and full assemblage. The governor in reply stated that so long as the workingmen of the state conducted their cause in a lawful and peaceful manner he would protect them as in duty bound; but if they should violate the law by interfering with the property of others, he would in accordance with his sworn duty, speedily suppress all acts of lawlessness.

All the acts of the strikers, however, were of a peaceful character, unless the peaceful assemblage of workingmen on property used for the convenience of the public, which belonged to the coal companies, could be construed into acts of lawlessness. President Ratchford and every other strike leader constantly urged the visiting miners to commit no lawlessness, nor attempt to intimidate by innuendos of violence, miners who declined to join the strike. The rage of the coal companies on seeing their men join the strikers knew no bounds; their heated imaginations construed every meeting of miners as a menace to the safety of their property. During the strike, which lasted twelve weeks, there was not a single act of violence committed.

The miners of Illinois, as soon as the suspension was declared, procured bands of music and patriotic banners, and marched from district to district to add strength to the strike feeling. Their acts, which were peaceable and orderly, were frequently construed by sheriffs as tending to rioting and the destruction of property. A number of requisitions were made on the governor for troops to preserve order and to suppress riotous demonstrations, but to all such appeals

he declared that the sheriff must first exhaust all his local power before troops would be called out.

In Illinois the leaders among the strikers appealed to the generosity of the public and organized committees to solicit subscriptions of money and provisions to supply the pressing wants of the needy. Public sympathy was aroused and liberal donations were made in the towns, cities and farming districts of the State. There was no rioting, scarcely an angry word uttered. The governor publicly declared that the conduct of the strikers was praiseworthy; that they had learned the secret power of all great undertakings, self-control; and told a delegation of miners who called upon him, that so long as the strike was conducted in an orderly and peaceable manner they would receive the sympathy of the general public in their endeavor to secure living wages. The governor blamed the operators, saying that the spirit of competition had got the better of their business judgment; in order to secure contracts they had cut prices, and reduced wages to the point of actual starvation.

In the state of Ohio public sympathy was with the strikers. The general public, in all the walks of life, made generous contributions for the support of the needy, the governor himself making a public appeal for aid.

The numerous trades unions of the country came promptly forward to the assistance of their fellow-workmen with contributions of money and expressions of sympathy. The American Federation of Labor and its affiliated unions made the miners' fight their fight, contributing largely from their exchequers and sending words of encouragement to carry the strike to a successful issue.

All through the struggle the mining operators were placed on the defensive. In the month of August, in the hope of enlisting the favor of the public they made overtures to Ratchford for the settlement of the strike by a plan of arbitration proposed by themselves, which Ratchford declined



to consider. On the 23rd of August a conference of representative miners and operators of the Pittsburg field, was held in Pittsburg, at which the operators submitted the following propositions for the resumption of work, each State to settle its own disputes by arbitration.

First. To start the mines of the Pittsburg district at fifty-four cents per ton, the award of the arbitrators to apply to all coal mines from the date of resumption.

Second. To start at sixty-one and a half cents per ton, the award to apply from the date of resumption.

Third. To start without naming a price, the board to report within thirty days.

All these propositions were rejected by the miners, who submitted the following counter propositions:

First: To start the mines of the Pittsburg district at sixty-nine cents per ton, the miners to accept a reduction should one be made by the board of arbitration to take effect from the date of the decisions of the board.

Second. To issue a call for a meeting of representative operators and miners of the competitive States.

The operators declined both propositions, and the conference adjourned. The Pittsburg operators in a public statement through a press committee charged Ratchford with having declined overtures for the settlement of the strike. Ratchford denied the charge, on the ground that the proposed arbitration would be binding on the Pittsburg operators only, and declared that the miners were willing and ready to settle the strike by arbitration which would apply to the whole competitive field.

At the instance of the Pittsburg operators another conference was called to meet on the second of September, at which the national executive board and the States presidents were present. The conference was in session two days, and resulted in the acceptance of a sixty-one cent basis, subject to ratifica-

tion or rejection by a national convention of miners' delegates to be elected for that purpose.

Many of the delegates to this convention were opposed to accepting the compromise, contending that the operators were whipped, and that a few days more of the strike would see them concede the sixty-nine cent basis. The convention, however, after a thorough discussion of the question voted to accept the sixty-five cent rate. The settlement was entirely satisfactory to the miners, who immediately resumed work.

This was the only successful great strike since the formation of the United Mine Workers' Union, and marked a turning point in the history of the organization. It was fought when the incubus of the panic was still in force, but was soon followed by a revival of business in all departments of human endeavor. Thousands of mine workers, who had withdrawn from the union, returned to their allegiance. Its success gave Ratchford a national reputation as a wise and able leader of men.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

READOPTON OF THE INTERSTATE AGREEMENT. — INAUGURATION OF EIGHT HOUR DAY. — THE SOUTHWEST STRIKE.

THE ninth annual convention of the United Mine Workers met in Columbus, Ohio, January 11, 1898. President Ratchford, in reviewing the results of the preceding year warmly congratulated the organization on its achievements. He was unanimously re-elected president. John Mitchell was elected vice-president.

During the past seven years when the trade was depressed and the market glutted, the operators, in order to secure contracts, had cut prices until there was no money in the business for the mine owners nor living wages for the miners. The general officers of the Mine Workers' Union had vainly endeavored to meet the operators, in joint convention, to formulate the annual scale. With the return of prosperity, however, the mine owners readily listened to overtures for a revival of the annual agreement, which had worked so satisfactorily to both parties. A joint meeting, to be held in Chicago, January 17th, had been agreed upon.

The national headquarters of the organization was removed from Columbus, Ohio, to Indianapolis, Indiana. The city of Pittsburg was selected for the next annual meeting.

When the ninth annual meeting of the United Mine Workers closed, the delegates adjourned to meet the operators, in joint convention, to formulate a wage scale for the year. The following scale was adopted:

First. That an equal price for mining screened lump coal shall hereafter form a base scale between the miners and operators of Indiana, Ohio, and Western Pennsylvania.

The block coal district of Indiana shall pay ten cent per ton over that of the Hocking Valley of Ohio, Western Pennsylvania and Indiana bituminous districts; and that the price of pick run mines in Hocking Valley and Pennsylvania shall be determined by the percentage of screenings, passing through a screen hereafter to be provided, it being understood that screened, or run of mine coal, may be mined and paid for on the above basis, at the option of the operators, according to the market requirements; and the operators of Indiana bituminous coal shall also have like option of mining and paying for run of mine, or screened coal.

Second. The screen adopted for the states of Ohio, Western Pennsylvania, and the bituminous districts of Indiana shall be uniform in size — six feet wide and twelve feet long — built of flat bar iron, of not less than five-eighths of an inch surface, with one and one-fourth inches between bars, free from obstructions; and such screens shall rest upon a sufficient number of bearings to hold the bars in position.

Third. That the block coal district of Indiana may continue the use of the diamond screen of the present size and pattern, with the privilege of run of mine coal, the mining price of which shall be determined by the actual screening; and the State of Illinois shall be upon the basis of run of mine system and paid on said basis.

Fourth. That the advance of ten cents per ton (2,000 pounds) for pick-mined, screened coal shall take effect in Western Pennsylvania, the Hocking Valley and the Indiana block coal districts on April 1, 1898; the Grape Creek, Illinois; and the bituminous districts of Indiana shall pay forty cents per ton for run of mine coal, based upon sixty-six cents per ton screened coal in Ohio, Western Pennsylvania and the bituminous districts of Indiana.

Fifth. That on and after April 1, 1898, the eight-hour work day, with the eight hours pay, shall be in effect in all the districts represented; and that uniform wages for day

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labor shall be paid the different classes of labor in the coal fields named above; and that all internal differences in any states or districts, as to prices or conditions, shall be referred to such States or districts; both as to prices and conditions.

Sixth. The same relative prices and conditions at present existing between machine and pick mining shall be continued during the life of this contract.

Seventh. That present prices for pick and machine mining and all classes of day labor shall be maintained in the competitive states and districts until April 1, 1898.

Eighth. That the United Mine Workers organization, a party to this contract, hereby agrees to afford all possible protection to the trade against any unfair competition from a failure to maintain scale rates.

Ninth. That this contract shall remain in force until April 1, 1898, and that the next annual interstate convention shall convene in Pittsburg on the third Tuesday of January, 1899.

The Hocking Valley operators did not agree to the above contract; believing that it worked an injustice to them. They contended for a five cent differential as against the thin Pittsburg vein. On the 30th of March a committee consisting of Thomas Johnson, H. D. Turney and J. S. Morton addressed a letter to Mr. Ratchford, demanding a board of arbitration to decide as to their paying a five cent differential as against the thin vein Pittsburg district. Mr. Ratchford, however, for manifest reasons, declined the demand, and later the Hocking Valley operators signed the scale.

On the 8th of March the representatives of the various competitive fields met at the Chittenden Hotel, Columbus, Ohio, in accordance with a resolution adopted at the Chicago Inter-State Convention. The following day wage scale was adopted:

Tracklayers .....	\$1 90
Tracklayers' helpers .....	1 75

Trappers .....	75
Bottom cagers .....	1 75
Drivers .....	1 75
Trip riders .....	1 75
Water haulers .....	1 75
Timbermen .....	1 90
Pipemen .....	1 85
Company men .....	1 15
All other inside day labor.....	1 75

For Illinois Operators — J. H. Garaghty and E. T. Bent.

For Indiana Bituminous Operators — Walter S. Bogle.

For Indiana Block Operators — C. B. Niblock.

For Pittsburg Thin Vein District Operators — J. C. Dysart and F. S. Osborne.

For Illinois Miners — J. M. Hunter and W. D. Ryan.

For Indiana Bituminous Miners — W. G. Knight and J. H. Kennedy.

For Indiana Block Coal Miners — J. E. Evans.

For Ohio Miners — W. E. Farms and T. L. Lewis.

For Pittsburg Thin Vein Miners — Patrick Dolan and Edward McKay.

For West Virginia Miners — Henry Stevenson.

The results of the joint agreement cannot be better summed up than in the words of President Ratchford in his annual address to the convention, which met the following January, in Pittsburg: "It advanced wages generally about eighteen per cent., and reduced the hours of labor in the same ratio. It reduced the size of screens to the smallest prevailing standard and to a great extent abolished them entirely. It equalized the wages of the different classes of labor and made conditions uniform in all the fields covered. It re-established healthy and mutual relations between employers and employes. It gave our organization peace and prestige in the business and industrial circles of the country, and banded together in unity and fraternity a greater number of miners,

covering a greater number of states than was ever known at any previous time in our history.

"Of all the advantages gained, to which brief reference is made, the eight-hour day is decidedly the greatest, because it is the most lasting. Wages, in the future as in the past, will advance and decline; conditions of employment will improve and deteriorate, according to general conditions and the strength of our organization; but the eight-hour day is a fixed principle of our trade to which we must firmly adhere and never surrender, regardless of any conditions."

The mining operators of West Virginia whose coal came in sharp competition with that of the operators of the interstate agreement, had been invited to send representatives to the joint convention held in Chicago, but declined to become a party to it. The miners of West Virginia also held aloof from the National Union, turning a deaf ear to the appeals of the delegates.

As a means of bringing the West Virginia operators within the pale of the competing states, President Ratchford and Secretary Pearce issued an address to organized labor and its friends, in behalf of the organized miners of the country, relating the recently established satisfactory relations between the miners and operators of the competing fields of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Illinois; that West Virginia, which by natural location belonged to this field, although urged to take part in the movement, declined to do so, and refused to accept the terms of the joint agreement, or meet their miners to formulate a wage scale in harmony with it. "The present mining rate in West Virginia," said the address, "is lower, the screens over which the miners' labor pass are larger, the hours are longer and the necessities of life, owing to the exorbitant prices imposed by the company stores, are higher than in any of the competing States. The miners are mainly unorganized and wholly at the mercy of the employers and therefore cannot be moved for better prices and condi-

tions. The organizers, sent among them, are prohibited from holding meetings on the public highways.

"For these and similar reasons, the general officers of the United Mine Workers recommend that the coal product of the West Virginia operators be deemed unfair; that its sale and consumption is injurious alike to all classes of organized labor, and that organized labor of every trade will not only withhold its patronage, but wherever practicable, refuse to handle such coal for shipment to market, or to distributing points, until fair conditions and living wages are granted the miners of West Virginia."

During the summer some of the Pittsburg operators refused to concede the full conditions of the interstate agreement. The Pittsburg miners, headed by the State president, Patrick Dolan, met on August 20th, and passed a resolution that five cents on the dollar be assessed on every miner of the district; and made an appeal to the miners of competing fields to insist that the recusant operators respect the Chicago agreement. Three thousand miners involved in the case laid down their tools. After the contest had progressed for several weeks the matters at issue were referred to the decision of a board of arbitration, consisting of three judges of Allegheny county, who decided in favor of the miners.

On the first of September, 1898, M. D. Ratchford resigned the active duties of the presidency of the organization to accept a position on the United States Industrial Commission to which he had been urged, not only by the miners' organizations, but other trades unions as well. The duties of the commission were mainly to investigate the cause of labor strikes and other industrial disturbances and conditions, which Ratchford, by reason of his long association with the state and national organizations of miners, was especially fitted to perform.

On the retirement of Ratchford, the national executive board selected the vice-president, John Mitchell, to act as



president for the unexpired term, subject to the direction of Ratchford.

Mitchell entered upon the duties of his office with all the enthusiasm of youth. Representatives of the National Union were dispatched into new fields where the voice of the organizers had never been heard; resulting in the creation of many new locals, and the resurrection of many old ones. Before the close of the year the States of Kansas, Arkansas and the Indian Territory were fairly well organized. The States of Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama were invaded and the organization put upon a solid footing.

In the central Kentucky district a dispute arose in regard to the chain and punching machines. After several unsuccessful attempts to settle the question, the matter was referred to the national executive board for arbitration, the parties in interest agreeing, in advance, to abide by the award. The miners' and operators' representatives appeared at the national headquarters to argue the case. A settlement satisfactory to the miners was, however, reached before the case was taken up, the operators yielding all the claims demanded.

A number of strikes were inaugurated, in one district or another, to enforce the scale rates. In one of these strikes, which occurred at Virden, Illinois, the Chicago Virden Coal Company imported negro miners from Alabama to replace the men on strike. When they arrived at the mines October 14th, the strikers gathered around them with fighting tools. The guards, who had the strangers in charge, fired into the strikers, killing eight of them and wounding a number more. The union miners returned the fire and ten of the guards fell dead. Shortly after the fight the coal company acceded to the demands of the strikers, paying the Chicago scale, and work was resumed.

A long and bitter strike occurred at Pana, Ill., to enforce the scale. These mine owners also imported non-union men from the south and protected them. Work went on for

some time without trouble. At length the rage of the strikers transgressed the law, resulting in a protracted attack upon the new miners, who were driven out of town, leaving a number dead.

In these armed contests the governor declined to call out the State militia to protect the imported miners. He openly avowed his sympathy with the strikers in their demand for the enforcement of the Chicago agreement. He was unsparingly denounced by many of the newspapers; but he held to the position he had taken. In the end all the companies which had declined to pay the scale wages gave up the contest.

At the tenth annual convention which convened in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, January 9, 1899, Ex-President Ratchford submitted a report of his administration from the beginning of the year 1898 to the first of September.

The following resolution, which was adopted by a rising vote, conveys the appreciation of the service Ratchford had done for the mine workers of the country:

WHEREAS, Our retiring president, Hon. M. D. Ratchford, has given us an honorable and successful administration, and

"WHEREAS, We believe that by a careful and considerate management of our affairs many blessings have redounded to us as a craft, and also to our families; and largely through his efforts we obtained the priceless eight-hour work day; Therefore, be it

"*Resolved*, That we, in convention assembled, do most earnestly tender him our appreciation of his valuable services in our behalf, giving him our hearty thanks, and wishing him success in future life and we recommend that he be made an honorary member of our organization."

A resolution was adopted to use every effort to strengthen the organization in the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania, in order that concert of action could be had between the bituminous and anthracite regions.

## RECEIPTS.

The report of the secretary-treasurer showed:

Balance in Treasury Jan. 1, 1898...	\$10,812 18
Receipts — Taxes .....	29,482 40
Receipts — Supplies .....	3,926 49
Receipts — Journal .....	5,161 94
Receipts — Miscellaneous .....	1,226 32
Receipts — Miscellaneous .....	1,226 32
Total.....	\$60,609 33

## EXPENDITURES.

Officers' salaries and expenses.....	\$23,441 08
Supplies .....	7,096 77
Office expenses .....	1,248 71
Postage, express, etc., .....	1,905 08
Miscellaneous .....	4,227 38
Total.....	\$37,719 02

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Balance in Treasury, Jan. 1, 1899.. \$22,890 31

John Mitchell was elected president, T. W. Davis, vice-president, W. C. Pierce, secretary-treasurer.

John Mitchell, elected president of the Mine Workers at the tenth annual convention, was born in Braidwood, Illinois, February 4, 1870. His mother died before he was two years of age, and his father was accidentally killed before he was seven. He went to work in the coal mines, at Braceville, Illinois, at the age of thirteen. Three years later he went west, going as far as Colorado and New Mexico. In 1888 he returned to Illinois, and went to work at Spring Valley.

In 1890 he went west again. The following year he came back to Spring Valley, and married Miss Katherine O'Rourke of that village, and has resided there ever since. His first connection with miners' unions began in 1885 — allying himself with the National Trades Assembly No. 135, of the Knights of Labor.



JOHN MITCHELL.

He was elected secretary-treasurer of the northern sub-district of the United Mine Workers of America in 1896 and in 1897 was elected a member of the State executive board. The same year he was appointed a national organizer by President Ratchford; two years later he was elected vice-president of the National organization. In January, 1899, he was elected president and has been unanimously re-elected at every annual convention since.

John Mitchell is emphatically a self-made man. He possesses a fine analytical mind, which goes through mazes of sophistry to the heart of a question. He has been a keen student of all those industrial questions which have been agitating the public mind since the development of the labor movement, and there is no more intelligent or broad-minded labor leader. He is cool, calm, self-possessed, thoroughly honest, and patient under adverse criticism. He has been confronted in debate by the keenest lawyers which the great corporations of the country employ, and he has more than held his own with them.

Mitchell's success as the head of the greatest organization of workingmen in the world has not elated him; he is still plain John Mitchell—modest, without diffidence. He appreciates the high esteem in which he is held by the American people, without the least display of vanity or pride.

When the tenth annual convention adjourned it met the operators in joint convention at Carnegie Hall, Allegheny City. The scale of last year was adopted.

The mining operators of the Hocking Valley of Ohio were not represented in the joint convention, and for some time declined to accept the agreement made at the joint conference, affirming that under its provisions the thin vein operators of the Pittsburg district had been given an advantage over them of five cents per ton. After several conferences with the national officials, the Hocking Valley operators gave up their contention and signed the agreement.

The block coal operators of Indiana also had declined to recognize the agreement, and had withdrawn from the convention. After several conferences with the national officers the pick mine operators accepted the agreement, but the machine mining companies still declined to recognize it and a strike resulted, which ended in the operators acceding to its terms.

In several of the mining districts outside of the competitive states the miners secured advances conforming to the scale. In Northern and Central Pennsylvania five cents advance was obtained on pick mining, the loaders in machine mines being correspondingly advanced. In the Kanawha, New River, Pocahontas and Fairmount districts of West Virginia, a substantial increase had been secured, but it required extraordinary efforts to bring it about, partly owing to the apathy of the miners themselves. In the States of Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama substantial advances had been obtained, in some cases amounting to thirty per cent. In the States west of the Mississippi river, increases were secured, ranging from five to eighteen per cent. A number of the big companies, however, declined to treat with the organization, which brought on some exceedingly bitter and protracted strikes.

During the year the organization put forth all its strength to establish the eight-hour work day. In the competitive States of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Illinois, where the joint conference had established the system there was no friction; but in the States outside the interstate agreement the opposition was often very pronounced. Before the close of the year, however, the movement had been extended to Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Kansas, part of Arkansas and the Indian Nation.

In the early part of February the general officers of the organization called a joint convention of the miners and operators of Arkansas and the Indian Nation to meet in the

city of Fort Smith for the purpose of discussing the wage scale, and the conditions of employment. The operators declined the overture. Anxious to avoid a strike until all peaceful means had been exhausted the miners' officials issued a second invitation, which the coal companies as in the first instance, declined to notice. The miners drafted a scale of prices, conforming to the Pittsburg agreement, and presented it to the operators with the request that they sign it. They peremptorily declined to consider it.

On the 1st of March, 1899, the miners laid down their tools, both in Arkansas and the Territory. The mine managers made frantic but unsuccessful efforts to induce the strikers to return to work.

The mining companies in the Indian Territory appealed to the Hon. E. A. Hitchcock, Secretary of the Interior, and asked him to declare the officers of the Mine Workers' Union intruders, and to expel them from the Territory.

President Mitchell no sooner learned the purpose of the operators than he applied to the Secretary of the Interior to withhold consideration of the operators' appeal, until the miners' officials were accorded a hearing. The Secretary replied, stating that a thorough investigation would be made before any action was taken. He detailed a special inspector to examine and report the conditions existing in the Indian Nation. Mitchell, fearing that the scenes enacted in 1894, when the strikers were forcibly expelled from the Territory would be repeated, addressed a letter to the officers of the International and General Labor Unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, requesting them to write to the Secretary of the Interior, and protest against any action looking to the forcible expulsion of the miners.

The general offices of the above named unions on receiving Mitchell's letter wrote Secretary Hitchcock, and received an answer to the effect that the department would act with

impartiality in the matter. No immediate action was taken and the strike went on.

Meantime the Choctaw Coal and Railroad Company; the Southwestern Coal and Improvement Company; the Kansas and Texas Coal Company; the Central Coal and Improvement Company and the Western Coal and Mining Company, organized a corps of agents which they dispatched to West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama, who gathered together a heterogeneous mass of white and negro strike-breakers, and brought them to the mines.

The striking miners and officers of the union pleaded with the imported men to join the strike, holding out the promise of support from the National Mine Workers' Union. Two of the strike leaders, John P. Reese and Albert Struple, addressed the strike-breakers at a public meeting called for the purpose, and appealed to them in the most solemn manner to desist from taking the work of men who were striking for living wages and fair conditions of employment. The coal companies again appealed to the Interior Department for protection against the presence of the miners' delegates, claiming that they had threatened to return in force and compel the imported men under pain of personal violence to join the strike. The Secretary addressed the following telegram to John Mitchell:

WASHINGTON, D. C., Sept. 9, 1899.

*"John Mitchell, President United Mine Workers of America, Indianapolis, Ind.:*

*"Have information that J. P. Reese of Iowa, and Albert Struple of Arkansas, recently addressed miners' meeting at Hartshorne, Indian Territory, urging miners now at work to strike, saying that they would hold further meeting on September 15th, bringing as many striking miners as possible and a brass band. Such proceedings are entirely contrary to law, calculated to excite riot and bloodshed, and will not be*



tolerated. I request that you unite with the department in suppressing such contemplated violations of law.

A. E. HITCHCOCK,  
Secretary of the Interior."

Mitchell sent the following telegram in reply:

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., Sept. 9, 1899.

*"E. A. Hitchcock, Secretary of the Interior,  
Washington, D. C.*

Message received. Meetings held recently by Reese and Struple in Indian Territory were for the purpose of inducing by persuasion only, miners at work to join those who are on strike for fair conditions of employment. It was our understanding that the constitution of the United States guaranteed all citizens the right of peaceful assemblage, and meetings held and contemplated were in accordance with this understanding. I cannot understand why mine workers have not as much right under the law to secure brass bands and march to a given point for the purpose of holding meetings, as any other class of citizens. However, I assure you that our organization will not countenance, or tolerate the commission of any overt act or violation of law."

JOHN MITCHELL,  
President United Mine Workers of America."

In the states of Kansas, Arkansas and Missouri, the operators had secured injunctions from the courts forbidding the strikers from holding public meetings in any of the striking districts, on the ground that such assemblages were calculated to cause rioting and bloodshed. Reese, who was young, intelligent and deeply interested in the cause of the strike, called a meeting at Yale, Kansas, to address the strike-breakers, whom he had invited to attend. The meeting was held October 16th on the public highway, a lumber wagon being used for a speakers' stand. It was conducted with great decorum, neither threats nor innuendos of violence being indulged in.

A few days after the meeting Reese was visited by a United States marshal, and cited to appear before Judge Williams, at Fort Scott, to show cause why he should not be punished for contempt of court. The injunction, which had been issued by the Kansas courts, was directed against citizens of that state, and Reese was a citizen of Iowa, and consequently the injunction did not apply to him. In the trial Reese proved that he was a citizen of Iowa, but notwithstanding he was convicted of contempt of court, and sentenced to imprisonment for ninety days, to pay a fine of \$100, and costs of trial.

The United Mine Workers came promptly forward in defense of their plucky representative. An attorney was employed to manage the case, who instituted legal proceedings under the habeas corpus act. After languishing in jail for thirteen days, Reese was released on bail, and the case taken to the Federal court at St. Louis, Judge Thayer presiding. The trial resulted in the acquittal of Reese on the ground that he was not a citizen of Kansas.

The arrest, trial and conviction of Reese excited great indignation among the industrial masses of the United States, by reason of the high-handed usurpation of judicial authority. The wage-workers of the country denounced by resolutions at every public meeting such un-American proceedings, which to some extent lessened their frequency and severity. President Mitchell was unsparing in his annual address to the United Mine Workers in the year 1900 against what he called "these protectors of corporate interests."

Meantime the strike went on, being supported from the funds of the National Union; and meantime the coal companies continued importing new miners, until they outnumbered the strikers. On the first of August, 1900, after a strike of seventeen months, the national board discontinued the payment of the strike benefits, which practically brought the long contest to a close.

The strike was not, however, a failure; for twenty-five companies in the States of Kansas and Missouri advanced the rate of mining, reduced the hours of labor, conceded the right of the miners to employ check-weighmen, consented to collect dues whenever the miners desired it to be done, and agreed to employ none but union men. The National officers exerted all their influence to have these concessions extended to the miners of the Indian Nation, but without effect. The Territory, however, soon recovered its lost ground; it was reorganized and again attached to the National Union.

On the first of August T. W. Davis resigned the vice-presidency, and severed his connection with the organization. No appointment was made during the remainder of the year.

This year (1899) was the most successful one since the formation of the United Mine Workers of America. Business had revived in every industry, work was plentiful and wages good. Every workingman's pail was full to overflowing. The organization became strong in numbers and financial resources.

In the anthracite region of Pennsylvania the miners enrolled themselves by thousands. At the close of the year the membership of the National Union amounted to 93,124, being an increase over last year of 88 per cent.

The receipts and expenses of the organization during the year were as follows:

RECEIPTS.

Balance on hand Jan. 1, 1899.....	\$22,890 31
Per capita tax.....	74,264 70
Supplies .....	6,961 37
Journal .....	6,642 44
Miscellaneous .....	906 75

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Total receipts.....	\$111,665 57
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## EXPENDITURES.

Officers' and Organizers' salaries.....	\$42,682	93
Supplies .....	10,276	94
Office expenses, rent, 'etc., .....	956	54
Delegates' transportation .....	3,563	74
Miscellaneous and donations .....	11,987	64
Total expenditures.....	\$72,287	32
<hr/>		
Balance in Treasury....	\$39,378	25

## CHAPTER XXX.

THE MARYLAND STRIKE. — ARREST OF THE LEADERS.  
GOVERNMENT BY INJUNCTION IN KENTUCKY.

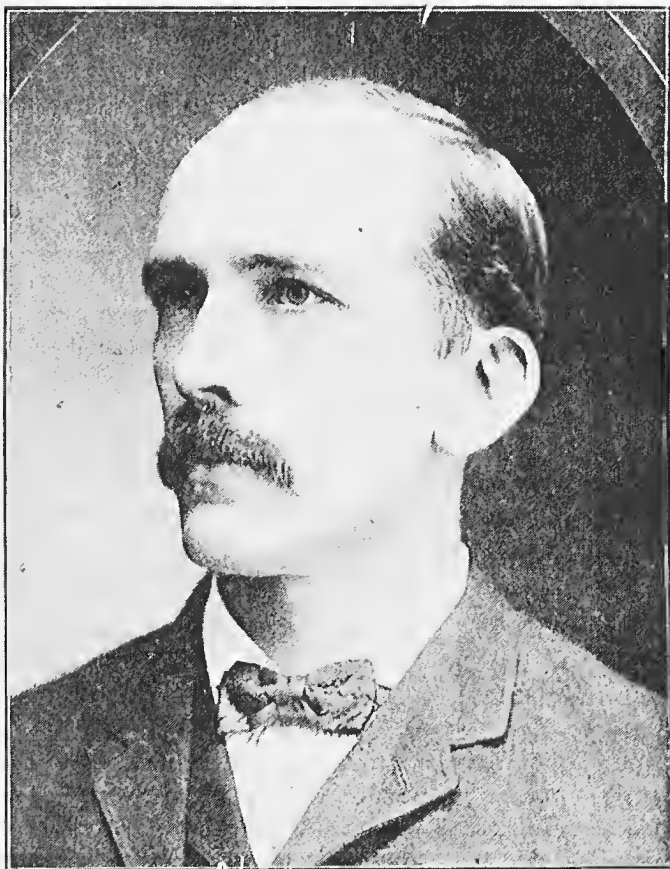
**T**HE eleventh annual convention of the United Mine Workers met in the city of Indianapolis, Indiana, January 15, 1900.

In his annual address, President Mitchell welcomed the delegates to the greatest convention of industrial forces represented in one trades organization which had ever met in the history of the world.

In the selection of officers, John Mitchell was re-elected president, and W. C. Pierce, secretary-treasurer, by acclamation. There were three candidates for vice-president — Thomas L. Lewis, John P. Reese and W. D. Van Horn. Lewis was elected on the second ballot, and his election was by motion made unanimous.

Owing to the enormous increase in the membership of the organization the office of vice-president had become of vast importance, requiring the services of a man of broad mind, great ability, and extraordinary energy, and Lewis possessed all these qualities. He was born at Locust Gap, Pennsylvania, in 1865, and went to work in the mines as a trapper boy before he had completed his tenth year.

Shortly after the village of Shawnee, Ohio, was laid out, his parents moved to that place. In 1882 Lewis joined the Knights of Labor, becoming a member of Local Assembly No. 169. Although only eighteen years of age, he took an active interest in all questions brought before the assembly, and soon became a ready debater, and a keen student of the



THOMAS L. LEWIS.

labor movement. It was a national misfortune to the industrial masses that the organization of the Knights of Labor went down. It was the best institution ever conceived for the education of the workingman. It was in truth a workingman's college, and no one profited more by it than Thomas L. Lewis.

He took a prominent part in the great strike of the Hocking Valley miners of 1884-5, although then but nineteen years of age. In 1889 Lewis moved to Bridgeport, Ohio, where he still resides. He was a delegate to the convention in 1890, which merged the rival organizations into the United Mine Workers of America, and has been a delegate to every annual convention since. He was president of the Ohio branch of the American Federation of Labor for three years, serving from 1896 to 1899. In 1896 he was elected secretary-treasurer of the Ohio branch of the United Mine Workers, and in January, 1900, was elected vice-president of the national organization.

Although deprived in early boyhood of the opportunity of acquiring a common school education, Lewis is a well-informed man. He attended night school whenever opportunity offered, and in 1899 took a course in the Normal Academy at Lebanon, Ohio.

Lewis has been a close student of the coal business, and has thoroughly informed himself in all its details. The operators find him a dangerous antagonist in the joint conventions for formulating the annual scale of wages. He is a ready debater, positive in statement, but liberal and fair-minded.

The convention adjourned on January 31. The scale committee, immediately after adjournment, met the operators in joint convention to formulate a wage scale for the year, to take effect April 1, 1900. The following agreement was made by and between the operators and miners of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Western Pennsylvania; but it practically

governed both miners and operators wherever the Mine Workers' Union had obtained a solid foot-hold.

SECTION 1. That an advance of fourteen cents per ton of two thousand pounds for pick mined, screened coal, shall take effect in Western Pennsylvania thin vein, the Hocking Valley the basing district of Ohio, and the block-coal district of Indiana. That the Danville district, the basing point of Illinois, shall be continued on an absolute run-of-mine basis, and that an advance of nine cents per ton over present prices be paid in the district named. That the bituminous coal district of Indiana shall pay forty-nine cents per ton for all mine-run coal loaded and shipped as such. All other coal mined in that district shall be passed over the regulation screen, and be paid for at the rate of eighty cents per ton of two thousands pounds for screened lump.

SEC. 2. That the screen hereby adopted for the State of Ohio, Western Pennsylvania, and the bituminous district of Indiana, shall be uniform in size, six feet wide by twelve feet long, built of flat or Akron-shaped bar, of not less than five-eighths of an inch surface, with one and one-fourth inches between bars, free from obstructions, and that such screens shall rest upon a sufficient number of bearings to hold the bars in proper position.

SEC. 3. That the block-coal district of Indiana may continue the use of the diamond-bar screen; the screen to be seventy-two feet superficial area, of uniform size, one and one-quarter inches between the bars, free from obstruction and that such screens shall rest upon a sufficient number of bearings to hold the bars in proper position.

SEC. 4. That the differential between the thick and thin vein pick mines of the Pittsburg district be referred to that district for settlement.

SEC. 5. That the price of machine mining in the bituminous district of Indiana shall be eighteen cents per ton less than the pick mining rate for screened lump coal, when



punching machines are used; and twenty-one and one-half cents per ton less than the pick mining rate when chain machines are used. When coal is paid for on run-of-mine basis, the price shall be ten cents per ton less than the pick-mining rate when punching machines are used, and twelve and one-half cents per ton less than pick mining rate when chain machines are used. That the machine mining rate in the Danville district, the basing point of Illinois, on both punching and chain machines, be thirty-nine cents per ton.

SEC. 6. That the machine mining rate in the thin vein of the Pittsburg district, and the Hocking Valley, the basing district of Ohio, for shooting, cutting and loading, shall be advanced nine cents per ton. And that the block-coal district of Indiana shall be advanced eleven and one-half cents per ton.

SEC. 7. That the mining rates in the Central district of Pennsylvania be referred to that district for adjustment.

SEC. 8. That the advance on inside day labor be twenty per cent., based on the present Hocking Valley scale; with the exception of trappers, whose compensation shall be one dollar per day.

SEC. 9. That all narrow, dead work and room turning shall be paid a proportionate advance with the pick mining rate.

SEC. 10. That internal differences in any of the states or districts, both as to prices or conditions, shall be referred to the states or districts affected, for adjustment.

SEC. 11. The above scale is based upon an eight-hour work-day.

For a number of years the miners of the state of Maryland had been without organization, but during the year 1899 they began to enroll themselves under the banner of the United Mine Workers' Union.

There had been considerable uneasiness manifested among them before this time touching the rate of wages paid in the

Maryland field. The miners of Pennsylvania and the Middle West had received an increase of fifteen cents per ton with the revival of business.

In the early part of March, 1900, the Maryland miners, who were now fairly well organized, invited their employers to meet them in joint conference for the purpose of discussing the wage scale and placing it on the same footing as that of Pennsylvania. The operators declined the invitation, but posted notices at the mines that the price of mining would be raised ten cents per ton. This was five cents less than the Pennsylvania basis, but the miners accepted it and continued working.

On the 31st of March, W. B. Wilson, who was president of the district, which included the Maryland field, visited George's Creek in company with John Mitchell and Samuel Gompers. All three addressed a miners' meeting. The following day a hundred of the leading miners who had attended the Wilson meeting were summarily discharged. The general officers appealed to the coal companies to reinstate the men, but to no purpose. The miners then struck for their reinstatement and sixty cents per ton.

The mining companies were fiercely opposed to the United Mine Workers Union, and had determined to stamp it out, at whatever cost of time and money. The miners were equally determined that the Union should be recognized. A committee of the business men of Frostburg and several of the strikers, employees of the Consolidated Coal Company, issued a circular to the strikers asking them to call a meeting and elect two delegates from each mine to meet President C. K. Lord of the Consolidated Company in Cumberland, to discuss the situation. The conference resulted in a promise of President Lord to redress the grievances of the miners, and to endeavor to secure conferences between the miners and the other companies.

The miners' and operators' representatives of each company met and discussed the situation, but when a general conference was asked, each of the companies replied as follows:

"New Central Coal Company will grant no concessions, refuses to reinstate all the strikers, and adheres to a 55 cent rate for mining. Piedmont Mines Company offers 55 cents, refuses conference and will not agree to reinstatement. Ryland Coal Company favors conference, will not agree to reinstate, and offers 55 cents per ton. Sinclair Mining Company (using mining machines) will pay 40 cents per ton, refuses to enter a conference. Union Company No. 1 offers 55 cents and will not guarantee reinstatement. Union No. 2 will not confer, refuses to promise reinstatement and adheres to 55 cent rate. Georges Creek Coal and Iron Company refuses conference, will give nothing else, and offers 55 cents per ton."

The miners' delegates after adjournment, called a mass meeting of their constituents to report the result. At this meeting a resolution was offered that the strike be turned over to the officials of the United Mine Workers' Union, and that no miner return to work until the general officers declared the strike off. William Warner, the national organizer, who had been managing the strike since the first of April, opposed the motion on the ground that its adoption would tend to increase the bitterness of feeling which the operators manifested toward the Mine Workers' Union, and the resolution was withdrawn. A resolution was adopted that the strike go on until the companies concede a joint conference, and pay sixty cents per ton.

Later a lawyer, who had formerly been a miner, undertook to break the strike. He hired a hall in Lonaconing, the chief mining town on George's Creek, and called a meeting of strikers. While addressing the meeting, a large number of strikers, not in sympathy with the object of the meeting, collected around the hall, and with derisive shouts and

opprobrious epithets manifested their opposition to the attorney's speech.

The following day six of the strikers were arrested, charged with rioting; interfering with workmen; and contempt of court. In the resulting trial they declared that the objects of the Mine Workers' Union, to which they belonged, were lawful; that the market price of coal had greatly increased during the past two years; that the Clearfield operators were paying the sixty cent rate, that for many years the George's Creek and Clearfield districts had paid the same rate, and that an unlawful combination of the George's Creek operators was defrauding them out of their just wages. For said reasons the operators had no right to ask the aid of the courts to further their unlawful purposes.

The accused were found guilty of unlawful assemblage and trespass, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the House of Correction, and to pay a fine of twenty-five dollars. The cases were taken to the Court of Appeals, which sustained the decision of the lower court. The general officers of the National Union endeavored to induce the governor of Maryland to pardon the convicted miners, without success. On the second of August the strikers reported for work, but 800 of their number were victimized.

On the 30th of April W. C. Pierce resigned as National secretary-treasurer, and William B. Wilson was selected by President Mitchell to fill the vacancy.

William B. Wilson was born in Scotland, in 1861, and emigrated with his parents to the United States in 1870. His first recollection of mining affairs was when his father was evicted from a company house a few months before the family left Scotland for America. He remembers having seen Alexander McDonald at a miners' meeting which the boy attended with his father. As McDonald entered the meeting in a carriage the miners cheered, shouted and yelled as if Bedlam had broken loose.

Wilson commenced working in the mines at Arnot, Pennsylvania, in 1871, and two years later joined the Miners' and Laborers' Benevolent Association as a half member. In 1877 he was elected secretary of the local union at Arnot, being then but sixteen years of age. In 1879 he joined the Knights of Labor. He was a delegate to the joint convention held in Columbus, Ohio, in 1890, which merged the National Progressive Union and National Trades Assembly of the Knights of Labor into the United Workers of America.

In 1900 he was selected by President Mitchell as secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America to fill the unexpired term of W. C. Pierce, and has been elected to succeed himself at every annual convention since. He has made a model secretary-treasurer, and is one of the strongest pillars in the national organization. He is well educated, broad-minded, modest and unassuming, and receives and deserves the confidence of both miners and operators. As a writer Wilson has no superior in the ranks of the labor movement. In 1906 he was elected a member of Congress.

The twelfth annual convention of the United Mine Workers which met in Tomlinson's hall, Indianapolis, January 21st, was in session ten days. The president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer were re-elected by acclamation. Twenty-four districts were represented in the convention; 98,329 members had been added to the organization the past year, making a total membership of 189,321. During the past two years \$104,951.37 had been expended in the work of organization, of which \$42,682.83 had been expended in 1899, and \$62,268.44 in 1900.

These vast sums had not been expended in vain. For wherever the organization was strong enough to command the serious attention of the operators, wage disputes and local grievances were settled peacefully by joint conventions. Wherever it had not obtained a foothold, or was too weak to command the attention of the operators, strikes had to be



W. B. WILSON, M. C.

resorted to, many of them of long duration, to compel obedience to the wage scale, and several of them were partial failures.

The report of the secretary-treasurer showed that during the past year \$154,676.82 had been expended in supporting strikes, and that when the convention met, the organization was paying out weekly the sum of \$5,000 for strike benefits. Many operators, especially in recently developed coal regions, were exceedingly stubborn in their opposition to the National Union; this opposition was still more pronounced in some of the older mining districts, like the anthracite region of Pennsylvania, and the Frostburg region of Maryland.

President Mitchell and Secretary-Treasurer Wilson spoke words of wisdom in addressing the delegates to the convention touching the inviolability of the contracts made with their employers.

Mr. Mitchell said: "It should be borne in mind that the provisions of our joint contracts cannot be enforced in the courts. Labor organizations cannot sue or be sued; and inasmuch as the honor and good faith of both parties are the only guarantee of the fulfillment of the terms of the agreement, it is doubly incumbent upon us to carry out religiously the letter and spirit of such agreements. Of course there are many sections of our national and district contracts which are repugnant to our sense of right; but we should not lose sight of the fact that we enter upon these agreements with full knowledge of their requirements, and we cannot without loss of honor and prestige, and incalculable injury to our movement, escape the responsibility of right and faithful compliance with those sections which happen to be unfavorable to us."

Mr. Wilson said: "We have persistently fought for the highest wages and best conditions of employment which the market would warrant under existing commercial methods, but when we have made an agreement, whether we get the

best or the worst of it, we have faithfully fulfilled the contract until it expired. This policy has given us a standing in the commercial world that no other labor organization ever attained. In living up to our obligations we have promoted our own interests, and the success which has attended the efforts of the United Mine Workers has assisted every trades union, and every wage worker, whether a trades unionist or otherwise, to higher wages, superior conditions, grander aspirations, and higher hopes for their achievement."

This year was remarkable for the duration of several strikes. One of these occurred in Hopkins county, Kentucky. The strike was inaugurated in November, 1900, and extended into 1902. The coal field was an isolated one; the operators and miners had long worked together in peace and harmony — the miners accepting without remonstrance the conditions which the mining companies deemed proper.

The St. Bernard Coal Company was the largest producer in the district. The president of the company was a good, kind-hearted man, who took a deep interest in the amelioration of his subterranean workmen. He had established and maintained two libraries and reading-rooms at the expense of the company, for the use of the miners, and in other ways manifested a spirit of kindness toward them. But with the return of prosperity the operators had not advanced wages to correspond to that in other districts; and when the delegates of the United Mine Workers appeared among the miners, and preached the gospel of trades union for the purpose of raising wages, abolishing the company stores, reducing the working day to eight hours, and improving the condition of miners generally, they preached to listening ears.

The coal companies looked upon these disciples of the Mine Workers' Union with no friendly eye, and attempted in vain to stem the current of organization. The miners joined the union, and demanded an advance of wages to



correspond to the advances conceded in other districts. The companies declined to grant the demand and a general strike followed, the miners being supported in their contention from the funds of the Mine Workers' exchequer.

The operators, finding that the miners were able to continue the strike for an indefinite time, sent agents out to collect a new set of miners. When they appeared on the scene the strikers appealed to them not to take the places of men who were on strike for their rights. The companies appealed to the courts for injunctions to restrain the strikers from interfering with their business.

The haste of the judges to comply with the wishes of the coal companies, and the sweeping conditions which the injunctions included, were travesties on American jurisprudence. One of these injunctions, issued by the clerk of the court of Hopkins county, during the absence of the judge, who had gone fishing, enjoined and restrained the strikers or others from disbursing or paying or furnishing "Any money or property to any person or persons for the purpose of maintaining, supporting, paying or furnishing any person or persons engaged in any way in endeavoring to injure or damage the plaintiff's mines or business, or to close the same down."

A still more sweeping injunction has since been issued by a Kentucky judge. The following is its text:

"Bell circuit court, commonwealth of Kentucky.

"Coleman Mining Company, plaintiff, vs. Wash Spicer and others, defendants.

"To the Sheriff of Bell County. Greeting:

"The defendants, Wash Spicer, Local Union No. 1733, United Mine Workers of America, Wash Spicer, president; Joe Rice, Green B. Reed and John Jeffers, are each temporarily enjoined and restrained from interfering, meddling, advising, counseling any person from working in the mines of Coleman Mining Company, either by intimidation or force

or any other interference or meddling with any person engaged or offering to engage in work in said mines *and by paying the expense of moving persons to leave said mines, and by paying said persons to desist from work in said mines, by furnishing them food and rations for so desisting and that they be enjoined from giving it out and causing it to be printed in the papers or otherwise, that any miners are locked out of said mines, for ten days from this date, and until the 18th day of September, 1907, at which time a hearing will be had before me for the perpetuation of this restraining order.*

"Given under my hand as judge of the Bell circuit court this September 11, 1907.

"M. J. Moss,

"Judge, Bell Circuit Court."

The general officers of the National Union continued to pay two thousand dollars a week out of the funds of the treasury to maintain the strike, and food continued to be supplied to the needy by committees appointed for the purpose, despite the above injunction.

The mining operators of West Virginia had long and successfully opposed the organization of miners' unions, and by display of skillful diplomacy, had impressed the miners of the State with the idea that the main purpose of the United Mine Workers in attempting to organize West Virginia was to turn trade over to the operators of the competitive states to the injury of West Virginia mining operators and miners alike. The national organization had, however, after many attempts and many failures, succeeded in obtaining a foothold in several of the districts, notably in the Thacker field and along New River. Two sub-districts had been organized containing a membership of 5,000.

During the month of February of this year a strike occurred in the Thacker district, over the discharge of some of the members of the union. The miners demanded their reinstatement, which the company would not concede. The strikers were supported from the strike fund of the National

Union. Both sides were obstinate—the employers to rid themselves of the union, and the miners to retain its ascendancy in the district. The Kentucky and West Virginia strikers were not successful, but they taught the mining companies the wholesome lesson that it is better to settle wage disputes and other grievances by joint conferences with their employes than by the barbarous method of strikes.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

THE ANTHRACITE STRIKE OF 1900. — WINTER QUARTER  
EXPLOSION. — FRATERVILLE EXPLOSION.

**D**URING the suspension of the bituminous miners in 1894, John Rinn, a member of the national executive board, was sent into Schuylkill county to solicit aid for the miners of the Clearfield District. Rinn saw that the anthracite miners were ready to ally themselves with the United Mine Workers, and wrote the national officers to that effect. John Fahy, another member of the executive board, was sent to assist Rinn and a number of locals were organized. A new district was formed, comprising the whole anthracite field. Rinn was elected president, but soon resigned and was succeeded by Fahy. Slow progress was made for a time as the panic was still in force. Fahy, however, persevered, and when times began to improve the hard coal miners joined the National Union in great numbers.

✓ In 1900 the region was fairly well organized, and the leaders ready and anxious to demand an advance of wages and better conditions of employment. The bituminous miners had been twice advanced since the revival of business, while the hard coal workers were still groaning under the conditions which the panic of 1893-7 had made it possible to impose. A spirit of fairness might have inspired the anthracite companies to voluntarily advance the rate of wages to correspond to the advances given by the bituminous operators. They, however, failed to view matters in this light, and affected surprise when such a demand was made.

Having the field well in hand the general officers of the United Mine Workers addressed the following circular letter to all the locals of the anthracite region:

"You are hereby notified that on Monday, August 13th, a convention will be held in Hazelton, Pennsylvania, commencing at 10 o'clock A. M. The purpose of the convention will be to devise means by which a joint convention of operators and miners can be held at some future date to arrange for a readjustment of the price of mining and scale of wages now being paid in the anthracite region, and to transact such other business as in the judgment of the delegates would prove advantageous to the anthracite mine workers.

"Your attention is called to the fact that the earnings of mine workers in all the bituminous districts where our organization is established have been increased from 20 to 50 per cent. during the past two years. It is our opinion that the time has arrived when the anthracite mine workers should receive a share of the increased profits which are being secured by the operators and miners of other properties.

"In addition to the mining price the convention will consider methods to abolish the pernicious system now in vogue in the anthracite region by which a part of the earnings of the mine workers is taken from them by the infamous system of dockage, and by the practice of compelling mine workers to load more than 2240 pounds for a ton."

The convention met pursuant to call, and issued an invitation to the mining operators to meet the miners' representatives in a joint conference on August 27th; but the invitation was disregarded. The miners' representatives on finding themselves ignored, wrote the national executive board for permission to strike within ten days. The board was, however, unwilling to sanction a strike until every peaceful means had become exhausted, and directed President Mitchell and Secretary Wilson to make another effort to bring about a joint meeting.

In accordance with instructions, Mitchell and Wilson sent a telegram to the presidents of the anthracite mining

companies stating that a strike was imminent in the anthracite region, and as the authorized representatives of the miners they proposed to the coal companies, as a means of averting the impending conflict, to submit the matters at issue to the decision of a board of arbitration, and requested an immediate answer as to whether the companies would accept or reject the proposition to arbitrate.

The anthracite companies did not answer the telegram, whereupon the national executive board ordered a strike to commence on September 17th.

A hundred and thirty-two thousand mine workers promptly laid down their tools on the day appointed for the strike. It was a terrible surprise to the mining companies, who thought that their miners, so long docile and obedient, would decline to obey the strike order.

After the contest had continued two or three weeks, two of the largest companies in the region posted up notices offering an advance of ten per cent. Other companies followed with similar notices. The strikers called a convention to meet in Scranton, October 12th, to discuss the proposed advance, which was attended by eight hundred delegates. A committee was appointed, of which John Mitchell was chairman, and Geo. W. Bartlein, secretary, which recommended that the advance be accepted, provided the operators would agree to continue it until the first of the following April; abolish the sliding scale in the Lehigh and Schuylkill districts; and agree to discuss other grievances with the committees of their own employes.

Two weeks after the close of the strike, memorial services were held at the grave of John Siney, in St. Mary's cemetery in St. Clair. Addresses were made by Daniel Duffy, chairman for the occasion; by George Harris; John Feleski, who spoke in the Polish language; Miles Daugherty; John Wisnoski, who spoke in Greek; W. Loder; and John Fahy. All spoke with emotion when referring to the good work done by Siney,

saying that it was meet and just that his memory should be honored in the manner chosen for the occasion. Daniel Duffy, who was an intimate friend of Siney, reminded the miners that they were enjoying the fruits of Siney's labors and that they ought to assemble annually to honor his memory.

John Mitchell could not be present owing to circumstances beyond his control, but sent a wreath of flowers which he asked to have placed on Siney's grave. The wreath was designed to represent victory. During the dirge of the Frackville band John Fahy tenderly placed the wreath on Siney's grave; then turning to the audience said with strong emotion: "It is highly meet and proper that we all in our own way offer up a silent prayer to the Lord." All stood with uncovered heads, bowed in reverential attitude. The scene was an impressive one.

John Mitchell received a number of handsome and valuable presents, and won golden opinions from friends in every walk of life, in appreciation of his management of the strike. The Elks of Scranton presented him with a solid silver cup; the members of the district executive board and district officers gave him a gold-headed cane; the Scranton breaker boys a gold medallion; local union No. 454, a gold medal; the ex-sheriff of Luzerne county a beautiful floral design. A number of other pleasing mementoes were presented. Mitchell bore his honors meekly, and returned to his office in Indianapolis carrying with him the high regard of the people of the anthracite region.

Notwithstanding the heavy drain upon the exchequer for the suport of strikes, and to meet the expenses of the organizers, the United Mine Workers' Union was rapidly increasing in numbers, wealth and influence. At the close of the year 1900 the secretary's books showed a paid-up membership of 115,511; the financial condition as shown by the auditor's report was as follows:

Cash in hand January 1, 1900.....	\$39,378 25
Receipts January 1 to December 31.....	333,945 27

Total.....	\$373,323 52
Expenditures Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1900.....	245,516 09

Balance in Treasury Dec. 31....	\$127,807 43
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The most destructive and heart-rending disaster in the history of coal mining in the United States occurred at the Winter Quarters mine, near Schofield, Carbon county, Utah, on the 1st of May, 1900. Upwards of two hundred men were killed as the result of this explosion.

The mine, which was a drift opening, had been in operation for twenty years, and employed four hundred and twenty-five miners. It was the property of the Pleasant Valley Coal Co., a wealthy corporation, which spared no pains in equipping the mines with the most approved machinery for mining coal, and for ventilation.

The seam was eleven feet thick, and the mine was said to be well ventilated. The mine inspector, who had examined the mine five weeks before the catastrophe, had pronounced the workings safe and the ventilation good.

Three hundred and ninety-eight men were at work when the explosion took place. Those beyond the reach of the rolling volume of burning air, who started for the outside before the after-damp had time to spread, reached day in safety, but all involved in the line of fire or who were hemmed in beyond the line of the product of the explosion, were either roasted to death or died victims to the surcharged atmosphere. Five outside employes who were at work in front of the mine were lifted off their feet, and blown some distance away, all being seriously injured; one had his skull crushed; another his shoulder put out of place; a third had his jaw broken.

The news of the explosion spread like wild-fire through the village and neighboring towns. Soon the wives, children



and mothers of the miners were gathered around the main entrance of the mine, wringing their hands and crying for husbands, sons and brothers. Their agonized shrieks were heard a mile away.

The workmen from the adjoining mines, on the line of the Rio Grande & Western Railway were no sooner apprised of the explosion than they threw down their tools and rushed to the scene of the catastrophe to assist in the rescue of the entombed miners, or perish in the attempt. They organized themselves into relief corps and entered the mine to search for the living and the dead; but were unable for some time to reach the scene of the explosion by reason of the deadly after-damp.

The first man brought out was still alive, but so horribly burned that he implored his friends to kill him and put an end to his sufferings. As the dead bodies were found, they were lifted into empty cars and carried outside. Those who had been enveloped in the rushing volume of burning air were roasted in a horrible manner. Many of them had been lifted by the force of the blast and thrown against the pillars; their limbs and bodies being mangled almost beyond recognition. In the districts remote from the explosion the victims had died from the effects of the after-damp. Many were found lying on their stomachs with their hands covering their faces; while others had buried their mouths in the slack in their efforts to escape the poisoned atmosphere. Their features were calm and placid; they had peacefully and painlessly fallen into their last sleep. A mining engineer and three assistants, who had entered the mine in the morning, to make a survey of the workings were found dead beside the transit, which was standing ready to take a sight. The engineer was a young man of great promise, and this was his first underground survey.

All the dead were not recovered until the 5th of May, four days after the terrible catastrophe. Every home in the

village of Schofield was a house of mourning; in many of which every bread-winner of the family had been stricken down. The number of the dead was reported as two hundred and fifty; it was later ascertained to be two hundred and one. *This is what it costs to mine coal.*

The Winter Quarters explosion was the last of four great fire-damp explosions which occurred in the coal mines of the United States within six months. The first of the series occurred at the Carbonada mine in the state of Washington, December 9, 1899, and resulted in the death of thirty-three miners; the second took place at the Braznell mine in Pennsylvania, December 23, 1899, by which forty men were killed; the third occurred in the Rush Run mine in the state of West Virginia, March 6, 1900, causing the death of forty-seven men, and the last at the Winter Quarters mine in the state of Utah, May 1, 1900, by which two hundred and one men lost their lives. Such an array of mining casualties has few parallels in the history of coal mining in any age or nation.

A number of conflicting theories were advanced in regard to the cause of the explosion. An inquest was held over one of the dead miners at his residence. The jury made no inquiry in regard to the cause of the great catastrophe; but only found "that John Hunter had met his death in the mines by reason of an explosion." The state mine inspector testified that in his opinion the explosion was caused by a blown-out shot. He stated that the mine was free from gas, that he had examined the place where it was claimed powder had been stored and that it was evident that the explosion started there, for the bodies taken from that point were badly burned. Bishop Parmelee, who visited the scene of the disaster, advanced the theory that some of the recently imported Finns had secretly taken giant powder into the mine for blasting, and that when a shot charged with this powder was fired it may have ignited some coal dust which exists in every coal mine in greater or less quantities.

The underground workings of the mine extended one and one-half miles from the entrance; the side entries extended three thousand feet or more. All the rooms of the old cross entries were worked out, and abandoned, and were seldom entered or inspected, and may have contained fire-damp, the absence of which in the most harmless of mines can never be trusted. It is pent up in the interstices and minute pores of the coal, and is frequently met in the more fiery mines, in pockets, which burst out suddenly, and pollute the air in a few minutes to the point of an explosive mixture. It is present in every coal mine, but often in so small a quantity as not to be detected on a safety lamp. In this condition it never constitutes an explosive mixture. It may be absent from a mine, as an explosive mixture, and suddenly appear in an alarming quantity. Being lighter than common air by nearly one-half, it floats on the roof and finds refuge in the higher workings. In the Winter Quarters mine it may have been present in the old workings in destructive power, while the mine inspector passed under with his naked light, for the seam of coal was ten or eleven feet in height. To detect its presence in such a mine the fire-viewer would be required to carry a pole to elevate his safety lamp.

A blown-out shot will not, under any circumstances inflame coal-dust unless the dust is very fine, very dry, and thickly spread over the floor in the direction of the blown-out shot. Of late years "the coal-dust theory" has been greatly over-done.

This awful catastrophe made a profound impression on the people of the United States. President McKinley sent the following telegram to the governor of Utah:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, May 3, 1900.

*"Governor Wells, Salt Lake City, Utah:*

"I desire to express my intense sorrow upon learning of the terrible calamity which has occurred at Schofield, and

my deep sympathy with the wives, children and friends of the unfortunate victims of the explosion."

The president of the Republic of France sent a message of condolence to President McKinley, which was delivered by Ambassador Cambon, and the *London Telegraph* said editorially, "That there will be deeper sympathy with the American people in this awful catastrophe, than has been evoked by any event on the other side of the Atlantic since the loss of the Maine."

The generosity of the coal company which operated the mine was manifested by a contribution of twenty-five thousand dollars for the relief of the widows and orphans of the stricken families; John C. Osgood, president of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, subscribed five thousand dollars; Salt Lake City gave five thousand dollars; the town of Provo three thousand. Many wealthy citizens contributed a thousand dollars each. The local branch of Armour & Company of Chicago shipped a liberal supply of canned goods to the families of the stricken miners.

On Monday morning, May 19, 1902, another terrible explosion occurred at the Fraterville mine in the State of Tennessee. An old and abandoned mine belonging to the Knoxville Coal & Iron Company had been broken into from the Fraterville workings, on Friday preceding the catastrophe. On Saturday there was no work. On Monday the miners had not been in the mine more than an hour when vast volumes of smoke and debris were observed to rise from the ventilating shaft and shoot high in the air, and to issue from the mouth of the mine, accompanied by a loud, dull noise resembling distant thunder. The explosion startled the inhabitants of the village and soon the wives and relatives of the miners were collected around the mouth of the mine in a state of uncontrollable terror and excitement.

George Camp, the mine superintendent, and three assistants, entered the mine to ascertain the cause of the explosion.

ion and the resulting damages. They had not gone in more than a few hundred yards when they came upon one of the miners stretched full length in the entry in an unconscious condition. He no sooner heard the roar of the ignited gas than he started to get out to escape the effects of the after-damp, but had fallen, where he was found. He was carried outside and recovered consciousness.

Two rescuing parties, consisting of fifty men each, were organized to enter the mine and search for the living and the dead. The first party penetrated about two thousand feet, when they came upon a dead miner who had been making his way out and became a victim of the deadly after-damp. The air was so foul that the rescuers could go no further, and they returned to the open air, to await the dispersion of the deadly gas.

At four o'clock in the afternoon a rescuing corps again entered the mine, going as far as the butt entries fourteen, fifteen and sixteen, and found twenty-two bodies in entry fourteen, nine in the left butt of entry fifteen, five in the right one, and eight in the left of entry sixteen. They were all dead, having been overcome by the insidious after-damp, as they were making their way out. Some of them had taken off their shirts and wrapped them around their heads, in the hope of keeping out the gas. In the region of the rolling volume of burning air the rescuers found men burned in a most horrible manner. Some of them had been lifted off their feet and thrown against the pillars, mutilating their bodies almost beyond recognition. One, a mere boy, had his head stricken entirely off. Two other decapitated bodies were found.

Five of the unfortunate men had sought refuge behind a trap-door in one of the butt entries. They had hermetically closed up the cracks at the foot, top and sides of the door for the purpose of keeping out the surcharged atmosphere. Finding that the after-damp was spreading toward them

from the break-throughs, they retreated to the face of the entry. One of them, J. L. Powell, had a pencil with which they each wrote messages on yellow paper used for cartridges, as follows:

"To My Wife:—We are shut up at the head of the entry with a little air; but the bad air is closing in on us fast. It is now 12 o'clock, Monday. Dear Ellen, I have to leave you in bad condition. Now, dear wife, put your trust in the Lord to help you raise my little children. Ellen, take care of my darling little Lillie. Ellen, little Elbert said that he trusts in the Lord. Charlie Wilkes said that he is safe in Heaven if he should never see the outside again. If we should never get out we are not hurt, only perished. There are but a few of us here and I don't know where the other men are. Elbert said for you to meet him in Heaven. Tell all the children to meet with us both there.

J. L. POWELL."

"My Darling Mother and Sister:—I am going to Heaven. I want you all to meet me in Heaven. Tell all your friends to meet me there; and tell your friends that I have gone to Heaven. Tell my friends not to worry about me as I am now in sight of Heaven. Tell father to pay all I owe, and you stay there at home or at my house, and bury me at Pleasant Hill, if it suits you all. Bury me in black clothes. This is about 1:30 o'clock Monday. So good-bye dear father and mother and friends, good-bye all. Your boy and brother.

JOHN HENDRON."

"From Henry Beach:—Alice, do the best you can; I am going to rest. Good-bye dear little Ellen darling, good-bye for us both. Elbert said the Lord had saved him. Do the best you can with the children. We are all praying for air to support us; but it is getting so bad without any air. Howard, Elbert said for you to wear his shoes and clothing. It is now 2:30 o'clock. Powell Harmon is in Audrey Wood's hands. Ellen, I want you to live right and come to Heaven.

Raise the children the best you can. Oh, how I wish to be with you. Good-bye all of you, good-bye. Bury me and Elbert in the same grave. My little Eddie, good-bye. Ellen, good-bye. Lillie, good-bye. Jimmie, good-bye. Horace. There are a few of us alive yet. Oh, God, for one more breath. Ellen, remember me as long as you live. Good-bye darling."

"To My Wife and Baby:— My dear wife and baby, I want you to go back home and take the baby there, so good-bye. I am going to Heaven, so meet me there.

JAMES A. BROOKS.

"To Everybody:— I have found the Lord. Do change your way of living. God be with you." (No name).

"To Geo. Hudson's Wife:— If I don't see you any more, bury me in the clothing I have. I want you to meet me in Heaven. Good-bye. Do as you wish.

GEO. HUDSON.

Another letter was found in the mine, which had been written by Powell Harmon, a member of the church, and the father of seven children. It read as follows:

"Dear Wife and Children:— My time has come. I trust in Jesus. He will save. Teach the children to believe in Jesus. He will save. It is now ten minutes to 10 o'clock, Monday morning, and we are almost smothered. May God bless you and the children, and may we all meet in Heaven. Good-bye till we meet to part no more.

POWELL HARMON.

The following note to his two sons, aged respectively twelve and fourteen years, was written below Harmon's letter to his wife and children:

"To My Boys:— Never work in coal mines. Henry, and you Condy, be good boys and stay with your mother and live for Jesus.

POWELL HARMON."

The last survivor of the catastrophe, Uncle Billy Morgan, who was the first man rescued, but who afterwards died in the arms of his daughter, was an aged miner, a native of Wales; who had been in one explosion in his native country, and another in Pennsylvania. He was universally respected, and before he died requested that Rev. J. C. Carnes, a Methodist minister of the gospel, should conduct religious services at his grave. Over a thousand miners attended the funeral of this aged victim of the mine disaster. He was buried under the auspices of the Knights of Pythias, of which society he was a member.

The most tragic and pathetic scene of this heart-rending catastrophe was the death of little James Chapman, a boy twelve years of age. He went to work with his father for the first time the morning of the explosion. His father had planned another career for him, but the boy had set his heart on becoming a miner. When the dead bodies of the father and son were found the father had the body of his little son wrapped in his arms. Their bodies were the last recovered.

The Sunday following the terrible calamity the church services were mournfully impressive. When the minister asked the worshippers to arise and sing "Rock of Ages," sixty widows dressed in deep mourning arose, and with streaming eyes and wailing voices joined in the hymn, to hide their sorrows in the bosom of their Savior who died that they might have eternal life.

On each recurring anniversary of the terrible catastrophe, the people of Coal Creek and the neighboring towns hold memorial services over the graves of the men and boys who lost their lives in the explosion. At the third anniversary the various societies of these towns turned out in the regalia of their respective orders, and marched to Longfield church, where memorial services were held in the church grove. The graves of all the victims of the great catastrophe were strewn



with flowers. In the afternoon services were held in the opera house, and the visitors listened to an address by the Rev. K. I. Cox. The names of all who perished in the explosion were read, and committees were appointed to visit the different cemeteries, where any of the dead were buried, to decorate their graves.

A history of the heart-rending mining catastrophes which have occurred in the coal mines of the United States would fill several volumes. These dreadful "accidents" which are confined to no single district or state, surpass in their frequency and destruction of human life the combined fatalities of the coal mines of the world.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## THE GREATEST STRIKE ON RECORD.

THE thirteenth annual convention met on the 20th of January, 1902, in Indianapolis, and was in session ten days. The miners of sixteen states and the Indian Territory were represented. Upward of a thousand delegates were present, representing 232,289 United Mine Workers.

Since the return of prosperity in 1897 the growth and achievements of the organization had been without a parallel in the history of labor unions.

In December, 1898, the membership was.....	54,700
In December, 1899, the membership was.....	91,000
In December, 1900, the membership was.....	189,329
In December, 1901, the membership was.....	232,289

At the close of the year 1900 there was a balance in the treasury of \$127,807.43. In 1901 the expenditures amounted to \$30,758.52 over the income, leaving a balance in the treasury of \$97,047.91. During the year the sum of \$202,926.07 had been donated for the support of strikers.

Before the convention adjourned a resolution was adopted directing President Mitchell and the National Executive Board to co-operate with the officers and members of the anthracite districts to bring about a joint conference of miners and operators, for the purpose of formulating a scale rate, and for the redress of other grievances. In case of failure on the part of the operators to meet their employes in joint conference, and a strike should be inaugurated, the United Mine Workers pledged themselves to aid their anthracite brothers in bringing the contest to a speedy and successful issue, by all possible assistance, moral and financial.

President Mitchell, on the 14th of the following February, addressed a circular letter to the presidents of the coal carrying railroads, inviting them to meet in a joint conference of operators and miners in the city of Scranton, on March 12, 1902, to formulate a scale of wages. The railroad companies declined to meet their employees, and declared that they would under no circumstances recognize the United Mine Workers' organization in any adjustment of grievances.

A convention of the United Mine Workers' Union of the anthracite fields met in Shamokin, March 18th. Desirous of preventing a conflict until every expedient for an amicable adjustment of the matters complained of had been exhausted, the convention directed Mitchell to again invite the operators to attend a joint meeting for the purpose of discussing the miners' grievances. Mitchell wired each of the presidents of the coal carrying companies, by direction of the convention, to ascertain if they would meet a committee representing the anthracite mine workers for the purpose of discussing and adjusting grievances which affect all the coal companies and their employees alike. The operators returned an answer similar to the one they sent February 14th, namely that they declined to meet their employees for the purpose named in the telegram.

The convention then issued a statement to the public, declaring the purpose of the anthracite miners to strike to secure their just and reasonable claims.

Before inaugurating the strike the convention appealed to the Industrial Department of the National Civic Federation to use its influence with the coal companies to bring about a satisfactory adjustment of grievances. Mitchell wired Senator Hanna, chairman of the Industrial Department, as follows:

"Anthracite mine workers have failed in their efforts to effect settlement of wage scale, and have declared for a suspension of work, to take effect upon date to be designated by

district officers. I am directed to appeal to Industrial Department of Civic Federation for its intervention to avert the threatened conflict. If you decide to call a special meeting of executive committee, kindly wire date and place of meeting."

Senator Hanna answered that the committee would meet in New York City, Wednesday, March 26th, and requested that a committee of the anthracite miners meet the executive committee of the Civic Federation there. J. D. Nichols, Thos. Duffy and John Fahy, the district presidents of the anthracite miners, and John Mitchell, met the conciliation committee and explained the situation in the coal field. Senator Hanna then arranged for a meeting with the representatives of the coal carrying railroads the following day, at which the miners' delegates were invited to appear and present their side of the matter at issue. Messers. Baer, Olyphant, Thomas and Truesdale, represented the coal companies, and Messers. Mitchell, Nichols, Duffy and Fahey, the miners.

At this meeting the miners' delegates presented their side of the controversy, and expressed the wish that all matters at issue might be settled without resorting to the barbarous method of a strike. The operators' representatives declined to make any concessions, or to favor arbitration. The conference adjourned to meet again in thirty days; the miners agreeing not to suspend work in the interval, and the operators promising to endeavor to reach an agreement at the next joint conference. The second meeting was again a failure.

A meeting of the executive board of the anthracite miners was held at Scranton, May 7th, to receive the report of Messers. Mitchell, Nichols, Duffy and Fahey, and take action on the situation. Still desirous of avoiding a strike, the executive board directed Mitchell and Nichols to address the presidents of the coal carrying roads the following communication by telegraph:

“SCRANTON, PA., May 8, 1902.

“Conscious of the disastrous effects upon mine workers, mine operators and the public in general, which would result from a long suspension of work in the anthracite coal regions, and with the earnest desire and hope of averting the impending calamity, the representatives of the anthracite mine workers have authorized us to submit the following propositions:

“First: Inasmuch as the anthracite mine operators have proposed to continue the present wage scale for one year, and inasmuch as the anthracite mine workers have unanimously resolved to ask that an increase of 20% should be paid on present prices to all men performing contract work; that eight hours should constitute a day’s labor for all persons employed by the hour, day or week, without any reduction in the present wage scale, and that coal should be weighed, and paid for by weight, wherever practicable; and inasmuch as in our recent conferences the anthracite mine workers and mine operators have failed to reach an agreement on any of the questions at issue, we propose that the Industrial Branch of the National Civic Federation select a committee of five persons to arbitrate and decide all or any of the questions in dispute, the award of such board of arbitration to be binding upon both parties and effective for a period of one year.

“Second. Should the above proposition be unacceptable to you, we propose that a committee composed of Archbishop Ireland, Bishop Potter and one other person that these two may select, be authorized to make an investigation of the wages and conditions of employment existing in the anthracite field, and if they decide that the average annual wages received by anthracite mine workers are sufficient to enable them to live, maintain and educate their families in a manner conformable to American standards, and consistent with American citizenship, we agree to withdraw our claims for higher wages and more equitable conditions of employment;

provided that the anthracite mine operators agree to comply with any recommendations the above committee may make affecting the earnings and conditions of labor of their employees. An immediate answer is requested.

JOHN MITCHELL, Chairman,  
F. D. NICHOLS, Secretary."

The operators declined to consider the propositions contained in the address. Thereupon the anthracite miners ordered a temporary suspension throughout the whole mining field, to take effect Tuesday, May 9th, and on the following Monday one hundred and forty thousand miners suspended work. Two days later, at a convention held in Hazelton, the suspension was declared permanent. The miners having drawn the sword threw away the scabbard. It was to be a fight to a finish.

The convention which inaugurated the strike adopted a resolution petitioning President Mitchell to call a special convention of the bituminous miners of the United States, at the earliest possible date for the purpose of considering the advisability of inaugurating a national suspension of coal mining in the interest of the anthracite miners now on strike.

Pursuant to instructions, Secretary Wilson called a national convention to meet in the city of Indianapolis, July 17th. The eyes of the whole American people were now turned towards Indianapolis. Coal, under our system of modern civilization, is almost as great a necessity as water. If the convention called out the four hundred thousand miners of the United States, a crisis would occur in business circles, such as the country had never witnessed since the dark days of the Civil War. The public conscience would have arrayed itself against the trades union movement and the cause of labor would have received a backset, from which it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to recover. The great heart of the American people beat in sympathy with the anthracite miners in their strike for living wages, shorter

hours of labor, and fair treatment; but had no patience with a sympathetic strike which would entail untold misery on millions of innocent people.

President Mitchell took strong ground against a sympathetic strike. In addressing the convention he said in part:

"Sympathetic strikes have many adherents, and the efficacy of such methods appeal strongly to those who, being involved in trouble, do not always recognize the effect of their action upon the public mind; but the history of the labor movement teaches lessons that should not be forgotten today. As far as my knowledge goes I do not know of one solitary sympathetic strike of any magnitude which has been successful; on the contrary the most conspicuous among the sympathetic labor struggles have resulted in ignominious and crushing defeat, not only for the branch of industry originally involved, but also for the branches participating through sympathy.

"It has been the proud boast of the United Mine Workers of America that during the past years, since our organization became a power in the labor world, contracts based solely upon the honor and good faith of our union have under the most trying circumstances been kept inviolate; and in this supreme crisis a failure to live up to the high standard that has made our union pre-eminent among organizations of labor, would prove a substantiation of all the charges and allegations made against us by our enemies, and would confirm, beyond the possibility of refutation the specious argument of the anthracite operators that the United Mine Workers of America is an irresponsible and unsafe body with which to deal."

The convention made short work of the proposition, declaring by an unanimous vote that the miners of the bituminous coal fields having entered into a contract with their employers to work for a year on the terms and conditions agreed upon the previous January, they were in honor bound to stand by the agreement.

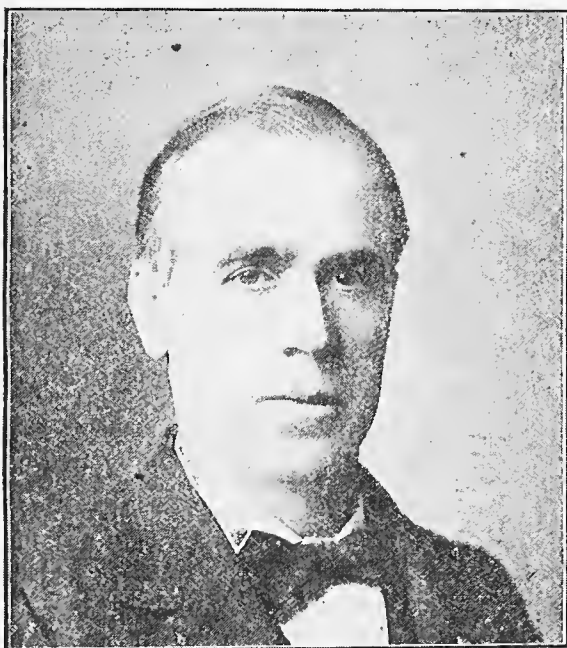
The American people, who love fair play in a fight, whether of brain or muscle, applauded the action of the convention. Contributions came pouring into the national treasury, without solicitation, from people in every walk of life, to aid the strikers. The National Union contributed \$50,000. The miners of Illinois, whose finances were managed by W. D. Ryan, a man of extraordinary business ability, also contributed \$50,000. This donation was the more remarkable from the circumstances that a month previous the miners of Illinois had donated \$50,000 to aid the miners of West Virginia.

William D. Ryan, the able and efficient secretary-treasurer of the State Union of the United Mine Workers of Illinois, was born in that state, March 3, 1861. When he was four years of age his parents moved to Braidwood, and at fourteen he went to work in the mines of that place. In 1878 he joined the Knights of Labor, and since that time has been an active member of different miners' unions in Braidwood. In 1897 he was elected secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of Illinois, to which office he has been since annually re-elected. When he assumed the duties of secretary-treasurer the organization was bankrupt — there was not a cent in the treasury, and there were not five hundred organized miners in the state.

After four years of hard work in organizing the miners, and managing the state organization, every miner in the state had become a member of the United Mine Worker's Union, and Ryan had become the custodian of more than a quarter of a million dollars. No state organization of the United Mine Workers' Union, or any other trade organization can boast of such an achievement. It stamps William D. Ryan as a masterful man in the financial world. As a citizen his character is above reproach. He is strictly temperate; possesses untiring energy; and is a man of comprehensive views. He is an extensive reader, a good thinker, a



gracful and vigorous writer, and while he cannot be classed among the leading orators of the organization he possesses the faculty of expressing his views with a brevity and clearness of statement which is often more convincing than the



WILLIAM D. RYAN.

highest flights of oratory. He is called, by his associate miners, "The miners' union of the state of Illinois." The future of such a man is secure.

The amount of money received from the various branches of the national organization, and from special assessments, for the support of the strike was one million nine hundred and sixty-seven thousand and twenty-six dollars and thirty-

four cents (\$1,967,026.34), not including two hundred and fifty-eight thousand three hundred and forty-three dollars and ninety-four cents (\$258,343.94) donated before the special assessment was made, making a total of two million two hundred and twenty-five thousand three hundred and seventy dollars and twenty-eight cents (\$2,225,370.28). The various trades unions contributed four hundred and nineteen thousand nine hundred and fifty-four dollars and fourteen cents (\$419,954.14), making a grand total of two million six hundred and forty-five dollars and fifty-two cents (\$2,645,324.52). This money was judiciously applied for the support of the needy, whether they belonged to the union or not. Relief committees were selected from each of the local unions, which furnished orders on the resident grocers, the money being paid from the funds in the national treasury in Indianapolis, to the resident district secretary-treasurers, in the anthracite field.

The coal operators made frantic efforts to break the strike, but could make no impression on the strikers. They asserted that a reign of terror existed in the coal field and that a majority of the strikers were ready to return to work if given military protection.

After the strike had progressed for some time an organization called the Citizens' Alliance was formed, with headquarters in Wilkesbarre, with the alleged purpose of preserving law and order throughout the strike region. Mitchell attacked the Alliance in a speech at Nanticoke, July 10th, which led to a breezy correspondence between the organization and himself. The Alliance appealed to Mitchell to declare:

"First. That the highways are free to all who desire to work, notwithstanding a strike is in progress.

"Second. Boycotts against any business or professional man on the ground of services rendered to a non-union worker are condemned by the union.

"Third. That hanging in effigy, the digging of mock graves, and every other form of violence, threat and libel, are condemned by the union.

"Fourth. Strikers who participate in any of the offenses thus itemized will be held responsible to the union for all disturbances, unlawful boycotts, etc., in which either they themselves, or their wives and children participate."

Mitchell in reply said in substance that the Citizens' Alliance real purpose was to destroy the miners' union and render futile its efforts to uplift the standard of citizenship by obtaining higher wages and better conditions of employment.

"I do not assume to say," added Mitchell, "that there have not been transgressions of the law by members of the miners' union; but I do say, and defy you to successfully contradict the statement, that there has been much less lawlessness on the part of the miners — and that which has occurred has been less serious — in proportion to their number, than on the part of the deputies and coal and iron police, who are charged with authority, and are specifically commissioned to preserve order, and against whom you have made no protest, and your association taken no action whatever. And further, the records of the courts will show that a smaller number of miners have been convicted of crime in the anthracite mining region during the progress of the strike than for a like period preceding it."

The leader of the coal companies was George F. Baer, president of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal Company. This company owned thirty-seven mines and employed 26,000 men and boys, and Mr. Baer by reason of his prominence as a mining operator, became the spokesman of the railway presidents and independent companies, through the press. In the month of July, Mr. W. F. Clark, of Wilkes-barre, a God-fearing man, addressed Baer a letter, appealing

to him to end the strike by making the necessary concessions to the miners. Mr. Baer replied as follows:

"MY DEAR MR. CLARK:—I have your letter of the 16th inst. I do not know who you are. I see that you are a religious man; but you are evidently biased in favor of the right of the workingman to control a business in which he has no other interest than to secure fair wages for the work he does.

"I beg of you not to be discouraged. The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for—not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God has given the control of the property interests of the country, and upon the successful management of which so much depends. Do not be discouraged. Pray earnestly that right may triumph, always remembering that the Lord God Omnipotent still reigns, and that His reign is one of law and order, and not of violence and crime.

Very truly yours,

GEO. F. BAER, President."

MR. W. F. CLARK.

This letter was given to the press, and Baer was held up to public gaze as representing himself as the vice-regent of the Almighty in starving 150,000 miners into submission, who were making a fight for living wages and fair conditions of employment. The press of the country was with the strikers and lampooned the coal barons without mercy. Baer's letter was the theme of endless merriment.

Yielding to the clamor of the mining companies that a reign of terror existed in the coal field the governor of Pennsylvania ordered out the entire National Guard, consisting of ten thousand men, to protect the miners who desired to return to work. The presence of the troops, however, instead of breaking up the strike induced a number of non-union men to leave off work and join the ranks of the strikers.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

INTERVENTION OF THE PRESIDENT. — THE MINERS RETURN TO WORK. — APPOINTMENT OF A STRIKE COMMISSION.

THE strike went on for months, neither of the combatants showing any disposition to weaken. The liberal and numerous subscriptions of money which came pouring into the treasury from the American people, in every walk of life, furnished the strikers with funds to prolong the strike indefinitely. But winter was approaching, and the people must have coal. The business interests dependent on the anthracite coal supply, had suffered from the beginning; and unless the mines resumed work the suffering would increase tenfold, especially among the poor of the cities.

The president of the United States determined that a way must be found to break the strike. After meditating profoundly on the subject he addressed telegrams to each of the presidents of the anthracite coal companies and to the president of the United Mine Workers, asking their presence at the White House. The following is a copy of the telegram sent to President Mitchell:

“WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 1, 1902.  
“*John Mitchell, President United Mine Workers of  
America, Wilkesbarre, Pa.:*

“I should greatly like to see you on Friday next, October 3rd, at 11 o'clock a. m., here in Washington, in regard to the failure of the coal supply, which has become a matter of vital concern to the whole nation. I have sent a similar dispatch to the presidents of the anthracite coal companies.

(Signed)

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.”

All the parties appeared at the White House on time. The conference opened at 11 o'clock. The operators and representatives of the miners were presented to the President. Those in attendance were:

George F. Baer, president Reading Railway System.

W. H. Truesdale, president Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad company.

E. B. Thomas, president Erie Railroad Company.

Thomas P. Fowler, president New York, Ontario & Western Railway Company.

David Wilcox, vice-president and general counsel Delaware & Hudson Company.

John Markle, representing independent operators.

John Mitchell, president United Mine Workers of America.

Thomas D. Nichols, Thomas Duffy, John Fahy, district presidents United Mine Workers.

Attorney General Knox.

Secretary Cortelyou.

Carroll D. Wright, Commissioner of Labor.

The President at the outset expressed his hearty thanks for their attendance and stated that owing to his peculiar relations to the situation he felt that he should make them a very careful statement of his position and of his intentions in asking them to meet him.

He then addressed them as follows:

"I wish to call your attention to the fact that there are three parties affected by the situation in the anthracite coal trade, the operators, the miners, and the general public. I speak for neither the operators, nor the miners, but for the general public. The questions at issue, which led to this situation, affect immediately the parties concerned—the operators and the miners; but the situation itself vitally affects the public. As long as there seemed to be a reasonable hope that these matters could be adjusted between the parties it did not seem proper for me to intervene in any way. I

disclaim any right or duty to interfere in any way, upon legal grounds or upon any official relation that I bear in the situation; but the urgency and the terrible nature of the



THEODORE ROOSEVELT.  
President of the United States.

catastrophe impending, where a large portion of our people, in the shape of a winter fuel famine are concerned, impels me after much anxious thought to believe that my duty requires me to use whatever influence I personally can bring to end a situation which has become literally intolerable. I wish to emphasize the character of the situation and to say that its gravity is such that I am constrained, urgently, to insist that each one of you realize the heavy burden of responsibility upon him. We are upon the threshold of winter with an already existing coal famine, the future terrors of which we

can hardly yet appreciate. The evil possibilities are so far-reaching, so appalling, that it seems to me that you are not only justified in sinking, but required to sink for the time being, any tenacity as to your respective claims in the matter at issue between you. In my judgment, the situation imperatively requires that you meet upon the common plane of the necessities of the public. With all the earnestness that there is in me I ask that there be an immediate resumption of operations in the coal mines, in some such way, as will, without a day's unnecessary delay, meet the crying needs of the people.

"I do not invite a discussion of your respective claims and positions. I appeal to your patriotism, to the spirit that sinks personal considerations, and makes individual sacrifices for the general good."

At the conclusion of the President's address, John Mitchell replied as follows:

"Mr. President: I am much impressed with what you say. I am much impressed with the gravity of the situation. We feel that we are not responsible for this terrible state of affairs. We are willing to meet the gentlemen representing the coal operators to try to adjust our differences among ourselves. If we cannot adjust them that way, Mr. President, we are willing that you shall name a tribunal which shall determine the issues that have resulted in the strike, and if the gentlemen representing the operators will accept the award or decision of such a tribunal the miners will willingly accept it, even if it should be against their claims."

When Mitchell concluded his remarks the President asked that a temporary adjournment take place, and invited the respective delegates to meet him again at three o'clock in the afternoon. During the interval the representatives of the coal companies, and John Mitchell, each prepared carefully written statements, touching the questions at issue and the proper means of ending the strike.



Upon reassembling, Mr. Baer addressed the President as follows:

*"To the President of the United States:*

"We understand your anxiety is forcibly expressed in the statement you read to us this morning to bring about "an immediate resumption of operations in the coal mines in some such way as will, without a day's unnecessary delay, meet the crying needs of the people.' We infer that you desired us to consider the offer of Mr. Mitchell, verbally made this morning, expressing and speaking for the United Mine Workers to go back to work if you would appoint a commission to determine the questions at issue. You distinctly say that you 'do not invite a discussion of your respective claims and positions,' but we assume that a statement of what is going on in the coal regions will not be irrelative.

"We represent the owners of coal mines in Pennsylvania. There are from fifteen to twenty thousand men at work mining and preparing coal. They are abused, assaulted, injured and maltreated by the United Mine Workers. They can only work under the protection of guards. Thousands of other working-men are deterred from working, by intimidation, violence and crimes, inaugurated by the United Mine Workers, over whom John Mitchell, whom you have invited to meet us, is chief.

"I need not picture the daily outrages committed by the members of the organization. The domestic tranquility, which the constitution declares is the chief object of government, does not exist in the coal region. There is a terrible reign of terror, lawlessness and crime there. Only the lives and property of the members of the secret, oath-bound order, which declared that the locals shall have full power to 'suspend operations at collieries,' until the non-union men joined their order, are safe. Every effort is made to prevent the mining of coal, and when mined, Mitchell's men dynamite

bridges and tracks, mob non-union men, and by all manner of violence, try to prevent its shipment to relieve the public.

"The constitution of Pennsylvania guarantees protection of life and property. In express terms it declares the right of possessing and defending it 'to be inalienable.' When riot and anarchy, too great to be appeased by the civil power occur, the governor of Pennsylvania is bound to call out the state troops to suppress it. He must fearlessly use the power of the state to protect life and property and to establish peace — not an armed truce — but the peace of the law which protects every man at work, and going to and from work. He has sent troops to the coal regions. Gradually the power of the law is asserting itself. Unless encouraged by false hopes, order will soon be restored and then we can mine coal to meet the public wants. If the power of Pennsylvania is insufficient to re-establish the reign of law, the Constitution of the United States requires the President, when requested by the legislature and the governor, 'to suppress domestic violence'.

"You see this is a lawful way to secure coal for the public. The duty of the hour is not to waste time negotiating with the fomentors of this anarchy and insolent defiance of law, but to do as was done in the war of the rebellion — restore the majesty of the law, the only guardian of a free people and to re-establish peace and order at any cost. The government is a contemptible failure, if it can only protect the lives and property and secure the comfort of the people by compromising with the violators of the law and the instigators of violence and crime. Just now it is more important to teach ignorant men dwelling among us, misled and used as tools by citizens of other states, that at whatever cost and inconvenience to the public, order must be restored. Pennsylvania will use the whole power of government to protect, not only the man who wants to work, but his wife and children while he is at work, and to punish every man who by instigation or

by covert act attempts to deprive any man of his liberty to work.

"Under these conditions we decline to accept Mr. Mitchell's considerate offer to let us work on terms he names. He has no right to come from Illinois to dictate terms in the acceptance of which anarchy and crime shall cease in Pennsylvania. He must stop his people from killing, maiming and abusing Pennsylvania citizens, and from destroying property. He must stop it because it is unlawful and not because of any bargain with us. We will add to our offer 'to continue the wages existing at the time of the strike and to take up at each colliery and adjust any grievance'; this further condition: If the employers and employes at any particular colliery cannot arrange a satisfactory adjustment of any alleged grievance, it shall be referred to the judges of the Court of Common Pleas of the district in which the colliery is situated for final determination."

Mr. Mitchell, speaking for himself and his associate delegates, followed Mr. Baer. He said:

"Mr. President: At the conference this morning, we, the accredited representatives of the Anthracite Coal Mine Workers, were much impressed with the view you expressed and the dangers to the welfare of our country from a prolongation of the coal strike, which you so clearly pointed out. Conscious of the responsibility upon us, conscious of our obligations to the 150,000 mine workers, whom we have the honor to represent, we have, after most careful consideration, and with the hope of relieving the situation and averting the suffering and hardship which would inevitably follow in the wake of a coal famine, decided to propose resumption of coal mining upon the lines hereafter suggested.

Before doing so, Mr. President, we desire to say that we are not prompted to suggest this course because of any doubts of the justice of our claims. In deferring to your wishes we are prompted by no fear on our part of our ability to continue

the contest to a successful issue. Thanks to a justice-loving American public, whose sympathies are always on the side of right, we are able to continue the struggle indefinitely. But confident of our ability to demonstrate to any impartial tribunal the equity of our demands for higher wages and



T. D. NICHOLS, M. C.

improved environments, we propose that the issues culminating in this strike shall be referred to you and a tribunal of your own selection, and agree to accept your award upon all or any of the questions involved.

“If you will accept this responsibility, and the representatives of the coal operators will signify a willingness to have

your decision incorporated under agreement for not less than one year, nor more than five years, as may be mutually determined between themselves and the Anthracite Mine Workers, and will pay the scale of wages which you and the tribunal appointed by you, shall award, we will immediately call a convention and recommend a resumption of work, upon the understanding that the wages which shall be paid are to go into effect from the day on which work is resumed.

Very respectfully yours,

JOHN MITCHELL,

T. D. NICHOLS,

THOMAS DUFFY,

JOHN FAHY,

For the Anthracite Coal Miners."

All the railroad presidents and representatives of the coal companies present at the conference read statements similar to that of Mr. Baer. They emphasized his assertion that a reign of terror existed in the coal field. Mr. Thomas, representing the Erie Railway Company, said in part:

"A record of twenty killed, over forty injured, and with constantly increasing destruction of dwellings and works, machinery and railroads by mob violence, with no proper enforcement of law or order by the proper officials, is not the time to act on Mr. Mitchell's suggestion, of this morning to arbitrate with men not in our employ. There are over 17,000 loyal employes at work in and around the anthracite mines, and since this conference has been called, open threats are current in the region that such men will neither be permitted to work, nor to live in that country."

Mr. Markle, representing the independent operators, said in part:

"I now ask you to perform the duties vested in you as president of the United States, to at once squelch the anarchistic condition of affairs existing in the anthracite coal regions by the strong arm of the military at your command.

A record of twenty-one murders, a long list of brutal assaults, houses and bridges dynamited, daily acts of violence now taking place, and several washeries burned down are actual evidence of the condition of lawlessness existing there. Are you asking us to deal with a set of outlaws? I can hardly conceive of such a thought."

When all the companies had read their statements before the president, he turned to Mr. Mitchell and asked if he had anything further to say. Mr. Mitchell replied:

"The charge by the gentlemen that twenty murders have been committed in the anthracite coal regions during the present coal strike is untrue. If they will name the men and will show that they have committed the murders, I will resign my position. This is a fair proposition, Mr. President, and a fair example of how our organization and our people have been maligned. The truth of the matter is so far as I know, there have been seven deaths, unfortunately. No man regrets them more than I do. Three of them were committed by the coal and iron police, and no one else has been charged with them. God knows the miners do not escape being charged with everything done there. They speak about burnings. There was a reward offered for burnings. I can bring affidavits of a hundred people, if necessary, that lightning caused one burning that they charged to the United Mine Workers. Mr. President, I have admitted on more than one occasion that there has been lawlessness, but I will say that a large portion of such lawlessness has been provoked by criminals who have been brought into the anthracite regions to recruit the coal and iron police. I want to say, Mr. President, that I feel keenly the attacks made on me and my people; but I came here with the intention of doing nothing and saying nothing that would affect a reconciliation."

At the conclusion of Mr. Mitchell's second statement the President asked the representatives of the coal companies whether they would accept Mr. Mitchell's proposition. They

answered that they not only would not accept it, but would not recognize him in any capacity whatever, in the settlement of the strike. The conference then adjourned.

The President was greatly disappointed with the result of the conference. "The spirit which sinks personal considerations and makes individual sacrifices for the general good" found no lodgment in the breasts of the railroad magnates and the coal companies.

Although disappointed at their selfish attitude, the President was not discouraged. He had made up his mind to find a way, or make one, to end a strike, which had now become a matter of national concern. The selection of an impartial commission, composed of men of high character and national reputation appealed to him as the practical way to act. Having reached this conclusion, he took swift means to have the mines started up.

The President wired Mitchell next day as follows:

"If Mr. Mitchell will secure the immediate return to work of the miners in the anthracite region, the President will at once appoint a commission to investigate thoroughly into all the matters at issue between the operators and miners, and will do all within his power to obtain a settlement of those questions in accordance with the report of the commission."

Mitchell took the President's suggestion under advisement. After conferring with the district presidents, he wired the President that from the attitude of the operators in the past, and their refusal to accept the decision of a tribunal selected by the President, he could not advise the miners to return to work, in the hope that the operators might be induced to comply with the recommendation of the proposed commission. Mitchell assured the President that he and his associate felt keenly the responsibility and gravity of the situation, and shared with him solicitude for the people of the country who were being subjected to great suffering and inconvenience by the strike.

The mining companies had insisted that the presence of the National Guard in the coal field would result in breaking the strike in two weeks, and had given out a statement to the press to that effect, and were still hopeful that it would soon fly to pieces. All the local unions in the region met in special convention, on the 8th of October, and declared by an unanimous vote that they would not return to work until the matters in dispute between them and their employers were decided by a board of arbitration; even if all the troops in the United States were sent into the anthracite coal field.

The operators had played their last card and lost. They visited the President at the Executive Mansion and offered to submit all matters at issue to a decision of a board of arbitration, to be selected by the President; but insisted that the board be composed of members of avocations which they should be permitted to name, and that no person representing organized labor should be allowed on the commission.

The President wired Mitchell to come to Washington at once. In the conference that followed, Mitchell strongly objected to the appointment of any commission which did not leave the President untrammelled in the selection of its members; and that in the appointment of the board, organized labor should not be discriminated against. The President concurred in this view, and consulted the representatives of the coal companies about the matter, who, after some discussion, modified their views to conform to the suggestions of the President. The following named gentlemen were appointed by the President as commissioners: Brigadier-General John M. Wilson, Mr. E. W. Parker, Judge George Gray, Mr. E. E. Clark, Mr. Thomas H. Watkins, and Bishop John L. Spaulding; Hon. Carroll D. Wright was selected as recorder.

Both parties acquiesced in the selection of the board. Mitchell returned to Wilkesbarre, and reported the situation to the executive boards of the several districts, who at once called a delegate convention which recommended the members



to resume work pending the decision of the commission appointed by the President.

The action of the mine workers' representatives was wired to the President the day after the convention in the following dispatch:

WILKESBARRE, PA., Oct. 21, 1902.

*"Hon. Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States,  
Washington, D. C.:*

"DEAR SIR:—We, the representatives of the employes of the various coal companies engaged in operating mines in the anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania, in convention assembled, having under consideration your telegram of October 16, 1902, addressed to John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers of America, have decided to accept the proposition there embodied, and submit all questions at issue between the operators and mine workers of the anthracite coal regions for adjustment to the commission which you have named. In pursuance of that decision, we shall report for work on Thursday morning, October 23rd, in the position and working places occupied by us prior to the inauguration of the strike. We have authorized John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers of America, with such assistance as he may select to represent us in all hearings before the commission.

JOHN MITCHELL,

Chr'm. of Convention.

W. B. WILSON,

Sec'y. of Convention."

The whole of the striking miners, amounting to 147,000, returned to work on the morning of the 23rd of October, in accordance with the resolution passed at the Wilkesbarre convention.

The strike lasted twenty-three weeks and three days, and was the best managed of any strike that ever occurred in the United States. Some lawlessness was committed during the suspension, as was inevitable; but not more than would have occurred had the mines been running full time. Considering

the duration of the strike, the number of men engaged in it, the bitterness of feeling which it engendered, it was one of the most orderly strikes that ever occurred in any trade in any country of the world, and stamps John Mitchell as a peerless leader of men.

All through this trying ordeal of twenty-three long weeks he never lost his temper and paid no attention to the rude and insulting remarks which the coal barons heaped upon him. While he stood unmoved under their innuendoes, and their sneering remarks, the president lost his temper and rebuked their rudeness. Speaking of these conferences afterward the president remarked that "there was but one gentleman present, and he was not that man."

Mitchell's extraordinary self-control, his simple and unassuming dignity advanced the cause of organized labor among the American people in all avocations. He illustrated in real life the high ideal of the poet:

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The man's the gowd for a' that."

His name and his fame was in every man's mouth. The president invited him to call at the White House without ceremony, or waiting, any time he visited Washington. All the honors heaped upon him—honors which would have turned the head of a United States Senator—made no impression on this coal miner of the prairies of the west. He was sensible of the high regard of his countrymen without the least display of vanity or pride.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### THE STRIKE COMMISSION. — THE PARTIES PRESENT.

#### THEIR CLAIMS.

THE commissioners met in Washington, October 24th, and organized by electing Judge Gray, chairman. He directed the recorder to summon the representatives of the operators and of the miners to appear in Washington to meet the commission on the 27th inst. for a hearing of their respective claims. After an informal discussion on the 27th of the matters at issue, the commission adjourned to meet on the 14th of the following November, to give the operators' and miners' representatives time to prepare the statements they desired to present.

During the adjournment the commission spent ten days in the anthracite region for the purpose of acquiring a practical knowledge of the general conditions under which the miners lived and worked, and to familiarize themselves with the physical conditions of the coal field.

The fifty-four independent operators involved in the strike appeared before the commission and filed written statements with the recorder, in common with the signatory companies.

The number of witnesses examined by the commission was 558. The anthracite mine workers called 240, the counsel for the non-union men called 153, the operators called 154, and the commission 11.

The demands of the United Mine Workers, and their reason for making such demands were presented by John Mitchell before the commission in the following statement:

*"To the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission:*

"The United Mine Workers make of the operators the following demands which were formulated by the Shamokin

convention held March 18th to 24th, and for the enforcement of which the strike was inaugurated:

"1st. An increase of 20% upon the prices paid during the year 1901 to employes performing contract work. This demand is made on account of the following reasons: First, the present rate of wages is much lower than the rate of wages paid in the bituminous coal fields for similar work. Second, the present rate of wages is much lower than is paid in any other occupation requiring equal skill and training. Third, the average annual earnings of the anthracite coal fields are much less than the average annual earnings in bituminous coal fields for substantially similar work. Fourth, the average annual earnings in the anthracite coal fields are much less than the average annual earnings for occupations requiring equal skill and training. Fifth, the rate of wages in the anthracite coal field is insufficient to compensate the mine workers in lieu of the dangerous character of the occupation, in relation to accidents, the liability to serious and permanent disease, the high death rate and the short trade life incident to this employment. Sixth, the annual earnings of the mine workers are insufficient to maintain the American standard of living. Seventh, the increased cost of living has made it impossible to maintain a fair standard of life upon the basis of present wages, and is not only preventing the mine workers from securing any benefit from increased prosperity, but has made their condition poorer on account of it. Eighth, the wages of the anthracite mine workers are so low that their children are prematurely forced into the breakers and mills instead of being supported and educated upon the earnings of their parents. Ninth, wages are below the fair and just earnings of mine workers in this industry.

"2nd. A reduction of 20% in hours of labor without any reduction of earnings for all employes paid by the hour, day or week.

"The second demand is similar to the first in that it is designed to increase the hourly rate of wages of mine workers employed by the hour, day or week, and all the reasons applicable to the first demand are asked to be applied to the second without repetition. In addition thereto we submit the following: Tenth, the 10-hour day is detrimental to the life, health, safety and well-being of the mine workers. Eleventh, shorter hours improve the physical, mental and moral conditions of the mine workers. Twelfth, shorter hours increase the intensity and efficiency of labor. Thirteenth, the tendency of national and state governments and of production generally is toward shorter hours. Fourteenth, a working day of eight hours is sufficiently long for the best interests of the workingmen and of the community.

"3rd. The adoption of a system by which coal shall be weighed and paid for by weight whenever practicable; the minimum rate per ton to be sixty cents for a legal ton of 2,240 pounds, the differentials now existing at the various mines to be maintained. This demand is made on account of the following reasons: First: Measurement by the legal ton wherever practicable is the only honest and just system of measuring the earnings of the mine workers. Second: When the operators sell or transport coal it is on the basis of a legal ton of 2,240 pounds. Third: The excessive ton was originally intended to compensate the operator for the weight of the small sizes of coal which were then discarded, but which are now utilized and sold, and therefore there is no present necessity for the use of any other than a legal ton.

"4th. The adoption of this system would remove an incentive, both to the operator and the worker, to cheating and dishonesty, and would allay jealousy among the miners, and prevent unjust discrimination and favoritism. Fifth: The change of the present system to the one asked for would

prove a strong factor in allaying suspicion and discontent among the mine workers.

"5th. The incorporation of an agreement between the United Mine Workers of America and the anthracite coal companies of the wages which shall be paid and the conditions of employment which shall obtain, together with satisfactory methods for the adjustment of grievances which may arise from time to time, to the end that strikes and lockouts may be unnecessary. In support of this demand we submit the following reasons: First: The anthracite mine workers should not be compelled to make or sign individual agreements, but should have the right to form such organization and choose such agents and officers as they desire, to act collectively instead of individually whenever their best interests are subserved thereby. Second: Agreements between employers and employes through workingmen's organizations are the ordinary methods of regulating production of wages in the bituminous coal fields, and in other large industries, and are beneficial, successful and in keeping with the spirit of the times. Third: Union of workingmen tend to better discipline of the men and to the improvement of their physical, moral and mental condition, and to the preservation of friendly relations between employer and employe. Fourth: Experience shows that a trade agreement is the only effective method by which it is possible to regulate questions arising between employers and employes in large industries, and that a trade agreement is the only possible way to establish the relation between employers and the wage workers in the anthracite field on a just and permanent basis, and as far as possible to do away with any causes for the re-occurrence of such difficulty as those you (the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission) have been called upon to settle.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN MITCHELL,  
Representative of the Anthracite Mine Workers."

After John Mitchell had concluded his address, two attorneys-at-law, on behalf of two thousand non-union miners, made the following demands and stated their reasons for so doing:

"1st. An increase of 20% upon the price paid during the year 1901 to employes performing contract and piece work.

"2nd. For a like increase of 20% upon the price paid during the year 1901, to employes paid by the hour or day.

"This request for increased wages rather than a decrease of hours of labor is earnestly urged because such increase of wages will apply to labor now receiving least pay at the mines, and being therefore the class which is especially in need of the increase of wages. Instead of desiring a reduction of the hours of labor we insist upon the right to work as many hours as we choose, and as opportunity affords, so as to better our conditions and increase our earning capacity, and we insist that the operators shall not conduct their mines in such a way as to favor certain workers in certain chambers and places of labor to the detriment of others who are willing to work. At the same time we insist upon the right of any of us to do as much work as the opportunity in the particular mine affords to offer, even though it may result in less work being done by another employe, who through indisposition, is not willing to work when opportunity affords, or by reason of any contract with the Mine Workers' Union restricting this class of labor.

"3rd. We demand the adoption at each colliery of whatever methods may be necessary and practicable to secure for the miner a minimum rate of 60 cents per ton of 2,240 pounds upon all coal sold from said colliery, the differentials now existing at the various mines to be maintained.

"4th. We protest against the making of any agreement between the United Mine Workers of America and our employers, determining what wages shall be paid us, and what shall be the conditions of our employment, or pretend-

ing to deal in any respect whatever with our rights or interests as mine workers.

"5th. We earnestly protest against any agreement being made by our employers with the United Mine Workers of America, for the reason that any agreement, if made will render it impossible for us to continue to earn our living by our labor in and about the mines in which we are now employed, or to which such agreement applies, and will subject us and our families to all manner of abuse, violence, outrage and probably murder.

"6th. We insist that it shall be an indispensable condition to any dealing whatever with members of the Mine Workers' Union of America in the anthracite coal fields that they shall be effectually required to desist from all manner of annoyance to us and to our families, and shall permit us to exercise our right to earn our living in any lawful manner we choose, and under any conditions which are mutually satisfactory to our employers and ourselves.

"7th. We protest against any rule limiting or restricting the number of cars to be furnished to a contractor, miner or laborer for the purpose of loading the same, whether such rule be made either by operators, the United Mine Workers or by the mutual agreement of both of them—providing that the furnishing of the increased number of cars to any contractor, miner or laborer does not in any way restrict the number of cars to be furnished others, and we insist that a rule shall be adopted and strictly enforced, compelling drivers in the mine or those having the management and distribution of the mine cars to the miner, contractor and laborer not to favor any particular miner, contractor and laborer in such distribution to the detriment and exclusion of other contractors, miners and laborers.

"8th. We believe it to be an inalienable and undoubted right to work when we can obtain it, and to receive as compensation for it the best price we can obtain. And we



further believe that the laws of the land vouchsafe to us protection from insult, outrage, violence, molestation or interference in the performance of our labors, and in order that we shall not be disturbed in the free and full exercise of these rights we most respectfully urge that the assertion of them be made a part of the finding in this proceeding.

"9th. In our efforts to earn a livelihood for ourselves, our families and those dependent upon us, we have been most outrageously interfered with. Our homes have been assaulted, and the lives of ourselves and those dear to us threatened. On our way to and from work we have been stoned, clubbed, beaten, insulted, jeered at, and the same course of outrageous treatment has attended us at our places of employment. In order that we might to some extent be protected at our work, our employers have been obliged to have guards constantly with us, and in many instances it became necessary to escort us to and from work to our homes. The sheriffs and their posses have been obliged to issue proclamation after proclamation to preserve the public peace and it became necessary to increase their deputies and forces to a large number in and about all the collieries in the anthracite mine region with a view to insuring the public tranquility. By reason of the destruction of life and property and the gravity of the situation in and about the coal fields, it became necessary for the governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to order the state troops to the places of violence and disorder.

"And this serious and outrageous course of conduct toward us was by no means confined to our homes and places of employment. It followed us everywhere. We have been hung in effigy in public places. The vicious and unlawful boycott has been practiced to such an extent upon us, that merchants dealing in the necessities of life have been forbidden to furnish us, even with food and clothing. In church where we worship, the service has been interrupted by members of the union because of our presence there. Our names

have been published in conspicuous places as being 'unfair' and enemies to labor. In very many instances, we have been obliged to stop work on account of fear, and we have been in constant terror. All kinds of crimes, even murder of our comrades and fellow-workmen, have been committed, for no other reason than that we insisted upon our right to work, and against this course of conduct we emphatically protest.

"10th. We hereby guarantee to abide by the decision final and conclusive.

NON-UNION MINE WORKERS."

By JOHN T. LENAHAU,

JOSEPH O'BRIEN, Attorneys.

The Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, by its president, George F. Baer, submitted a long and carefully prepared statement in answer to John Mitchell's demands. He stated that the company owned 37 collieries, 4 washeries, and employed 26,829 men and boys in and about the mines, previous to the inauguration of the strike. He characterized the demand of Mr. Mitchell for 20 per cent. advance as arbitrary, unreasonable and unjust, and denied that there was any such similarity between the mining of bituminous and anthracite coal as to make wages paid in one the standard for the other; denied that the rate of wages paid by his company is lower than that paid in the bituminous fields, and further denied that the rate of wages in the anthracite mines is insufficient to compensate mine workers in view of the dangerous character of the occupation in relation to accidents, liability to serious and permanent disease.

He averred that miners of temperate and economic habits saved money, invested such savings in houses, building associations and other property, that deposits in banks aggregating millions of dollars had been made; that the standard of living was equal to that of the average American workman, and that the towns and cities were better in the anthracite

region than any towns in the bituminous coal fields of the United States. He denied that the children of anthracite miners were prematurely forced into the breakers and mills by their parents, because of the low wages of such parents, and averred that there was no mining region in the world where miners have so many comforts, facilities for education, general advantages and such profitable employment as in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. He denied that the ten-hour day was detrimental to anthracite mine workers; or that shorter hours improved their mental, moral or physical condition, or increased the intensity and efficiency of labor.

Mr. Baer stated that the United Mine Workers inaugurated a strike and by threats and intimidation caused a suspension of work at all mines, that the strikers issued a formal official order requiring pumpers, firemen and engineers to desert their posts of duty with intent to force submission to their unjust demands by the destruction of the mines, and by threats of violence they tried to prevent other men from taking the places of the firemen, pumpmen and engineers, knowing that if the company could not keep the pumps going the mines would become flooded, making it impossible to mine coal for many months after the strike was ended, which would deprive the miners of work, and cause untold hardship to the public because of the company's inability to furnish coal during the winter months.

Mr. Baer further stated that when a labor organization limited to the anthracite mining region was created which shall obey the laws of the land, respect the rights of every man to work, whether he belongs to a union or not, and shall honestly co-operate with employers in securing good work, efficiency, fair production, and necessary discipline, trades agreement may become practicable.

In addition to the answer of the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company, answers were made to John

Mitchell's statement by the Delaware and Hudson Company, the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company, the Pennsylvania Coal Company, the Hillside Coal and Iron Company, Scranton Coal Company, Lehigh Valley Coal Company, Lehigh and Wilkesbarre Coal Company, Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company, and by the Independent Coal Operators of the Lackawanna and Wyoming region. These answers were largely a repetition of Baer's statements, and are too voluminous to be included in this history.

When the anthracite miners notified the President that they would return to work October 23rd, and submit all questions at issue between the operators and themselves for adjustment to the commission which the President had appointed, they felt that a great victory had been achieved.

On Wednesday, October 30th, the people of Wilkesbarre and vicinity met to do honor to John Mitchell. Thirty-six local unions of the United Mine Workers, paraded the streets, with banners flying and marched to the park of the Young Men's Christian Association to hear addresses of prominent citizens of Wilkesbarre and other places. Rev. J. J. Curran presided. The Rev. James Powers of Spring Valley, Illinois, spoke in part as follows:

"Fellow-Citizens :— Words cannot portray the deep feelings of joy, I have for you, the victors of the great anthracite struggle which has inspired the admiration of the world. The miners battled and won.

"It has pleased me greatly to be able to greet you and add my tribute to the men who have been patient, enduring, tried and not found wanting. The contest which you have brought to a successful termination, has advanced the cause of labor and instilled hope in the minds of the tired and worn workingmen, has given them the key which will overcome all obstacles, and eventually lead to success. You have won, not by rioting, not by word, not by deed, but by unswerving patience and endurance."

The Rev. James Moore said: "I am glad to mingle with you and rejoice in your victory." He placed a small boy on a chair and continued: "Your battle was for the redemption of this boy. He will dig coal when you are in your graves. The battle just won was not for the present only, but for unborn generations; because the operators will realize that they possess the same fighting spirit which you displayed, and will treat with them. Victory is on your banners. Do not forsake the union; do not forsake its principles."

A number of other speakers followed, among them Mother Jones, a lady who has given the best years of her life to the uplifting of the industrial masses. She compared John Mitchell to Abraham Lincoln, "both rising from obscurity, both being from the state of Illinois, and both working for the same end — the liberty of man."

John Mitchell was called upon, who spoke with characteristic modesty. He said in part: "Language is inadequate to express the feeling of gratitude I have for the men, women and children of the anthracite coal region who have honored me so much today. In all the walks of life the lime-light shines on some men more brilliantly than on others. It has shone on me and many kind and generous men give me more credit than is my due.

"The victory of the great strike belongs to the men who struck; but behind them were a great force, whose names never got into the papers. They are the brave women and children who endured the suffering without perceptible murmur — they deserve the credit. I desire to pay a tribute to the men, women and children of the anthracite coal mines.

"I hope that this will be last great strike; I hope there will be perpetual peace and prosperity. But I shall never advise our people to surrender their right to strike. I want our men to be better workmen than the non-union men; I want our people to demonstrate that union labor is the best labor.

"I wish the operators no enmity; I do not want them to be our enemies. I believe if they understood our lofty purposes they would meet us in conference, and the days of lockouts and strikes would be eliminated. I desire to impress upon your minds and hearts that the only safeguard you have is your membership in trades unions. Bear in mind, if you are negligent and give up your union, just so sure the operators will make you pay for this strike."

The following were some of the mottoes on the banners which the local unions carried in the grand parade:

"Hail to Mitchell, the chief of men,

Who chased the 'Baer' into his den."

"We honor and respect our Presidents, Roosevelt and Mitchell."

"\$100.00 reward for the whereabouts of the Citizens Alliance."

"We extend our thanks to organized labor."

"We thank the American people for past favors."

"God bless our union and our country."

"This country is filled with pure air."

The strike commission awarded an increase of ten per cent. above the rate paid before the inauguration of the strike; the right to employ check-weighmen when a majority of miners wished to have them placed on the tipples; that their wages should be deducted and paid through the office of the company; that no person should be discriminated against, who is not a member of the miners' union, and made provision for a sliding scale of prices to be governed by the selling price of the coal. The awards were to continue in force until the 1st of April, 1906.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

THOMAS L. HARRIS, ONE OF THE OLDEST MINERS IN OHIO. —  
LONGEST STRIKE ON RECORD.

**C**OAL mining is an extra hazardous occupation; notwithstanding men are occasionally found swinging the pick who have exceeded the allotted span of three score and ten. Thomas L. Harris of Shawnee, Ohio is one of that-number. He is in his 78th year and works every day the mine runs. He was born in South Wales in 1830, and is the son of a British soldier who was in the battle of Waterloo.

Harris emigrated to the United States in 1861, settling in Coshocton, Ohio, and later moved to Shawnee where he has resided for the past twenty-seven years. He began work in the mines of his native country in his 16th year, and was in several explosions of firedamp before coming to America. He has worked continuously in the mines for sixty-two years. He and his good wife, who is still hale and hearty, celebrated their golden wedding in the Opera House in Shawnee February 5, 1906. There were 876 people at the golden anniversary. His hearing is as good as it ever was and he has never worn glasses. His rugged constitution is such that he has not spent more than five dollars in his life for medicine. His frame is as tough as whalebone.

When McKinley was running for governor the second time, Mrs. Harris and her daughter were keeping the Bear Hotel in Shawnee and the governor took dinner there. The ancient pair are proud of having entertained the future president of the United States. Harris is in good circum-



THOMAS L. HARRIS.

stances, and does not need to work; but he is never so happy as when he is swinging his pick in the gloomy recesses of the mine. He is the father of twelve children.

A prominent figure in the miners' movement for living wages and fair conditions of employment, both in England and the United States, is W. R. Fairley, of





W. R. FAIRLEY.

Alabama. He was born in England in 1845, and went to work in the mines of his native country at the early age of eight years. At sixteen he joined the Miners' Association of Durham, and was a member of its executive board for seven years, and was two years a member of the Miners' National Association of Great Britain, of which Alexander McDonald, member of Parliament, was president.

In 1880 Fairley emigrated to the United States, settling in Ohio. Two years later he moved to Alabama, and took a prominent part in organizing the miners of that state. In the settlement of the national suspension of 1894 he urged

the executive board to abandon the strike before the strikers developed into a lawless mob, when it would be too late to secure terms by compromise, and it was largely through his earnest appeal that the executive board agreed to call it off.

He was a member of the arbitration board between the miners and operators of Alabama in 1903, of which Judge Gray was chairman, whose award increased wages and granted semi-monthly pay days.

In July 1904, a portion of the miners of Alabama engaged in the longest strike on record. It lasted over two years, and although the mining operators brought strike-breakers to the mines neither rioting nor disorder of any kind occurred.

The national organization contributed more than three-quarters of a million dollars for the support of the strike. The state organization of Illinois contributed a hundred thousand dollars. The money raised by district assessments exceeded one hundred and eighty thousand dollars. The total cost of this stubborn and enduring contest considerably exceeded a million dollars.

When the long contest came to an end there was no stampede on the part of the strikers. The strike was declared off in the district convention with judicial gravity, and the organization kept intact. The magnificent leadership was due to Fairley, and stamps him as a peerless leader of men.

That explosions of fire-damp are largely due to blundering incompetency or criminal carelessness has been demonstrated in the Steubenville district of Ohio, and many other fields. These mines are shaft openings, and give off fire-damp copiously; but they are ventilated to perfection. All the stoppings in this district are closed in such a manner that no part of the air can leak. The current at the last breakthrough is so strong that the break-through below it has to be left open until the entry is driven in the fast, because the strong stream of fresh air chills the miners.

Every room and entry in the mine is examined every morning with trained fire-bosses before the miners are permitted to go down the pit. Nothing is left to miscalculation or to accident.



*William Smurthwaite*

In the shafts of the Steubenville Coal and Mining Company, of which William Smurthwaite is superintendent, there has not been a miner burned by fire-damp for upward of forty years. Smurthwaite came to Steubenville in 1861,

and has been mine foreman and superintendent for forty-eight years, retiring a year or two ago from active duty at the advanced age of 77 years. In all these years there has been only three fatal accidents in the mines under his management. Such a record is without a parallel in the history of coal mining either in the United States or Great Britain. He is one of the most intelligent, practical mining engineers in Ohio; he is a good chemist, a good draftsman, and a good mining geologist.

Smurthwaite had the confidence of both miners and operators in all the years of active duty as mine boss and superintendent. In every dispute between employer and employe he was selected as umpire and his decision was never questioned by either party. He made conscience of his work and could not have been hired to do a wrong thing. He is one of the best loved men in Steubenville.

Every shaft in the Steubenville district is well ventilated, neither time nor money being spared to maintain systematic perfection. This is the cheapest and best way to operate mines. Even if the destruction of human life is not considered, the destruction of property, and the loss of time and expense in repairing the wreck is a hundred fold greater than the cost of building brick stoppings, maintaining roomy airways, and providing fans capable of creating an abundant current of air.

George Harrison was appointed chief mine inspector of Ohio in 1904 by Governor Herrick. He was the second practical miner appointed to the office since its creation in 1874. The miners of Ohio owe it to themselves to see that a practical miner is selected in future. It is their fault and not that of the politicians that the law intended for the protection of human life in the coal mines of the state is never again prostituted to political purposes.

Mine Inspector Harrison went to work in the coal mines of England at the early age of ten years. He is a self-taught



GEORGE HARRISON,  
Chief Inspector of Mines of Ohio.

man, and has made a good inspector, devoting his whole time and attention to the duties of his office and the preservation of the health and safety of the miner in whose interest the law was enacted.

Underground mining has ever been regarded as labor fraught with peculiar dangers and hardships. Most people, unaccustomed to its scenes from boyhood, experience some degree of horror at the thought of being buried, even for a few hours, in the bowels of the earth. Among the ancients, so great was the horror of mining, that all underground work

was assigned to slaves and convicts. In Egypt and other ancient kingdoms, the mines were the property of the kings, and the miners were convicts, prisoners of war, and purchased slaves. Both sexes and children of all ages were compelled to labor in the mines, and they lived there day and night. The miners, divided into different gangs, were placed under overseers of different nationalities, and were chained to prevent them from mutiny and escape. Their labors were terribly exhausting. At thirty years of age the strongest men were worn down from the effects of mephitic gases, cruel treatment, and hard work, and many of them were forced to labor until they fell dead.

In these modern days of civilization and enlightened education, however, the occupation of a miner is regarded with honor; all known and approved safeguards are thrown around him, which the law and art and science can command, to make his occupation safe and salubrious.

Miners, from whatever nationality they may have originally come, or whether natives for generations, have many ideas in common. Working by the piece or ton, each is, in a sense, his own boss. When work is plenty and cars are abundant, they work with uncommon energy, one man often doing in eight or nine hours what would be a fair day's work for two men. No man will admit that another can put out more coal than he, and the younger and more robust will seldom acknowledge that they are ever tired. During the slack or dull season of the year, they have a great deal of leisure time waiting on cars in the mine, and they pass most of this spare time in groups, the main topic of discussion at these social gatherings being the relation of labor and capital. Any man who takes a contract for work at less than the usual price is regarded as having disgraced himself. During a strike it is held to be an infamous act to work, and men regard it as a high honor to be able to say that neither themselves or any of their relations ever did so.

There are many grades of intelligence among these underground coal workers, but taking the whole body together, they may be divided into two distinct classes—the temperate and industrious and the intemperate and thriftless. There are about as many of the one class as the other. The larger number of the temperate and industrious are professing Christians, members of the church, are readers of books and newspapers, and will take rank as among the most intelligent of the workingmen of the United States. The church members are generally Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians.

Many of this class of men own the houses and lots in which they live, and have money out at interest. Some of them, who have large families of children, have little ahead, but they pay their way as they go, and owe no man a cent.

The intemperate and thriftless class pass most of their spare time in the saloons of the mining villages. These places are the curse of the coal mines, and they are as numerous as they are demoralizing. They are frequently kept by miners who have been victimized for having been conspicuous in some former strike, and who profess to be heroes and martyrs to the cause of labor. Sometimes a miner who has been crippled by a fall of rock or coal, or whose lungs have been wasted by working amidst the foul and noxious gases of a badly ventilated mine, engages in the business as his only means of making a living.

Miners are remarkable for their generosity and for their spirit of daring. When any one of their number gets hurt in the mine in the pursuit of his calling, his associates are always ready to assist his family until their fellow-craftsman's wounds are healed, and he is again fit for work.

The character which I have drawn of miners seldom finds its way into the public press, and what the public usually know of this race of men has been learned of them during the prevalence of a strike, when their blood is hot and their evil passions are aroused. Even then the vices and follies of

miners are exaggerated a hundred fold. As M. Simonin well says in "Underground Life," "the public has passed by the collier with too much indifference; the philosopher, the savant, the artist, the romance writer, have not sufficiently examined him."

The following statement in reference to the character of British coal miners, a race of men from which the great majority of our American miners are drawn, is taken from "Colliery Management," an able work by Jonathan Hyslop, Esq., a colliery proprietor and mining engineer in Lanark, Scotland.

"It is now nearly twenty-five years since my apprenticeship commenced at an English colliery, and thus the greater portion of my life has been spent in daily contact with miners.

"During that time I have had ample opportunity of knowing them; have stood in various relationships to them; have dealt with English, Scotch, and Irish in all the varying phases of trade, and the result is, as far as that experience goes, I have found them reasonable when fairly dealt with, grateful in return for kindness, ready to put forth an extra effort in emergencies, forbearing when they might have done harm, slow to take advantage of mistakes, and as faithful and obliging as the workmen of any other class."



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

EXPLOSION OF FIRE-DAMP IN WEST VIRGINIA. — THE  
STUART EXPLOSION.

THE labor conditions in West Virginia, in many of the mining districts, are markedly tyrannical and oppressive, resembling the despotism of Russia. In the company stores at such mines outrageous prices are charged for merchandise. For a powder can, which usually retails at ten cents, the miner is charged sixty cents. Ventilation is frequently very defective and more men are annually killed by explosions than are killed in any other State in the union or nation in the world, ton for ton mined, and man for man employed. Miners are forbidden from joining a labor union and private detectives are employed by many of the coal companies to report all movements looking to organization.

As the natural result of such conditions labor is scarce and foreigners are imported by labor agencies in the East, and delivered at the mines for two dollars a head above the cost of transportation. The majority of the mining operators of the state are honest and honorable business men, but the species of tyranny described are so numerous that they are regarded by outsiders as the prevailing practice in all the mining districts.

The Governor of the state, the Hon. W. M. O. Dawson, in a special message to the Legislature (session of 1907), relating to the mining laws, submitted a memorandum of mine explosions, five in number, which occurred in the coal mines of the state, as follows:

November 4, 1905, Tide Water, drift, McDowell county, 7 killed; January 4, 1906, Coal Dale, Drift, Mercer County, 22 killed; January 18, 1906, Detroit, drift, Kanawha county, 18 killed; February 8, 1906, Parral shaft, Fayette county, 23 killed; March 22, 1906, Century, shaft, Barbour county, 23 killed.

In giving the cause of these explosions one is attributed to fire-damp, three to blown-out shots, which set coal dust on fire, and one to the explosion of a keg of powder.

Those who have made explosions in coal mines a study have found that almost invariably the responsible managers place the blame for causing these catastrophies on the dead miners — some one had left a door open, or tampered with his safety lamp, or gone into places which were marked "Dangerous," or had fired a blown-out shot — everything, in fact, except the true cause, insufficient ventilation and keeping the mine clear of coal dust, and these are matters over which the miner has no control whatever.

Coal miners, equally with other classes of workingmen, where dangerous forces surround them in their daily avocations, are often reckless and foolhardy, and lose their lives through their own carelessness; but they are never directly responsible for either fire-damp or coal-dust explosions. It is the duty of the responsible managers "to provide and maintain an adequate ventilation, so as to dilute and render fire-damp harmless," and to "clean up fine, dry coal dust, or sprinkle it with water," so that it can not inflame.

It matters not what the prevailing danger may be — fire-damp, white-damp, black-damp, or inflammable coal dust — fresh air can be forced forward through all the ramifications of the mine to render the mephetic and explosive gases perfectly harmless; and coal, dust, which will inflame from a blown-out shot, can be loaded up and removed from the mine, making a coal dust explosion impossible. But these

well-known precautions add materially to the cost of the dead work of the mine, and the managers comfort themselves with the reflection that there is no immediate danger, until an explosion occurs, killing scores of men and throwing whole neighborhoods into mourning.

Because of the dangers which surround miners — dangers which have no parallel on earth — the State of West Virginia, in common with all the coal mining states in the union, has enacted special laws for the preservation of human life in coal mines, and employed mine inspectors to see that these laws are enforced and obeyed. The enforcement of these laws have very materially lessened accidents in all of the coal producing States except West Virginia. Fire-damp is not more abundant in the little mountain State than in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois and not one-fifth as abundant as in the mines of Great Britain, Belgium, France or Germany, many of which are 2,000 feet deep and upward, yet more miners are annually killed by explosions in West Virginia, man for man employed, or ton for ton mined, than in any coal producing State in the union or any nation in the world.

In a special message of the governor of West Virginia to the legislature in January in the year 1907 he used the following language: "In some of these mines in certain parts of the State the miners are oppressed and wronged. They are compelled under some circumstances to work in ill-ventilated and otherwise unfit mines. They are cheated in the payment of compensation for their labor. They work on conditions for so much per ton for the coal mined by them; the coal is not weighed, but is calculated by the mine car. These cars, at least in some collieries, are rated at a capacity of two and a half tons, whereas they often have a capacity of four tons and in some cases even up to six tons, but the miner is paid for only two and a half tons and for all above that he mines he gets no pay whatever. \* \* \* At some of the mines accidents are not reported as the law requires, because

the operators fear that the knowledge that accidents have happened will prevent the securing of labor."

The above quotation is not the statement of a labor leader, but is an extract from the solemn message of the governor of the State of West Virginia to the legislature. "In Wyoming county" (I again quote from the message) "the contract laborers are held in peonage, guarded by armed men, until they have paid back the transportation money, and if they escape they are unlawfully arrested and brought back by no gentle means, and sometimes by vicious, cruel, lawless men employed as guards. \* \* \* The use of guards in this State is not restricted to cases like these we are considering; they are used also at some collieries to protect the property of the owners, to prevent trespassing, and especially to prohibit labor agitators and organizers of miners' unions from gaining access to the miners."

Inside of two weeks after Governor Dawson sent his special message to the Legislature relating to the mining laws, one of the most fatal and destructive catastrophies that had ever taken place in the State occurred at the Stuart colliery in Fayette county. The shaft was one of the deepest and most gaseous in West Virginia, and had but one opening.

The explosion occurred on the 29th of January at 12:30 o'clock in the afternoon and killed every man in the mine — eighty-five in number. Owing to the destructive force of the blast, the air courses were so badly wrecked that brattice cloth had to be taken into the mine to temporarily patch up the torn places of the airways so as partially to renew the circulation and discharge the fiery and mephitic vapors of the mine before a rescuing party could penetrate the working places and recover, by the feeble light of safety lamps, the charred and mutilated bodies of the victims of the explosion.

An investigation as to the cause of the catastrophe was made at Parral on the 2d of March before Justices A. M. Kincaid and J. P. Staton and a jury. The evidence taken

was voluminous and contradictory. The jury found that the explosion was caused by firedamp and coal dust, but placed no responsibility or blame on anyone for the cause of the explosion.

Several attempts were made by experts employed by the state to examine and report the cause of the explosion, but they were not able to go through the mine and make a thorough inspection, because of the inflammable gases which filled the working places where the people were burned and mutilated by the burning fire-damp.

Mr. J. O. Brooks of Clarksburg, W. Va., a mine expert, made a partial examination of the mine to determine the cause of the catastrophe February 4. He went down the pit twice and inspected as much of it as he could with safety, and from what he saw became satisfied "that the explosion was caused by fire-damp, and that coal dust was not a factor in causing or propagating the explosion."

Mr. Samuel Dixon, president and general manager of the Stuart Colliery Company, in his evidence at the investigation before Justices A. M. Kincaid and J. P. Staton, stated in answer to the question:

"Is the Stuart mine a gaseous one?"

"It was never so considered."

Mr. Edward Pinkney, fire-damp inspector of the New River Fuel Company, whose duties included the Stuart mine, stated in his evidence, "That he was frank to say that he considered the mine as safe as any mine could be made, except the addition of a second opening."

If this statement were true there could not have been an explosion.

Mr. James O'Boyle, the mine foreman, on the other hand, who was the former fire-damp inspector, and who therefore knew more about the mine in its aggregate and in its parts, than any person connected with the colliery either as an official or as a miner, made the following answer to questions:

Q. Did you find fire-damp in that mine often?

A. Yes, sir, but not in dangerous quantities.

Q. What parts do you usually find gas in?

A. Well, the worst parts were in the west side — the side toward Parral.

Q. Did you ever have occasion to mark the entry where Dick Lee was found, "Dangerous?"

A. I believe I have.

Q. Did you ever have occasion to caution the men with reference to any part of the mine?

A. Yes, sir; probably brattice might be torn down by falling slate.

This statement throws a flood of light on the condition of the mine, and as Mr. O'Boyle had no possible object in making it except to tell the truth, it upsets the far-fetched, and labored suppositions of the witnesses who for manifest reasons wished to conceal the truth.

The Stuart mine was comparatively a new one, the shaft, which is 585 feet deep, having been sunk in the year 1905, and none of the underground workings extended more than the third of a mile from the bottom of the pit in any direction. The main entry on the west side of the shaft was known as the Parral entry and was headed for the Parral mine for the purpose of establishing communication with a counter entry approaching from the Parral mine, to avoid the expense of sinking an escapement shaft. An explosion had occurred in the Parral mine eleven months before the Stuart mine explosion, but was less destructive to human life, the number of dead being 24 as against 85 in the Stuart mine. When the Parrel mine exploded it too had but one opening.

The Stuart mine was laid out on the triple entry system, next to the long wall manner of mining coal the best system in practice for carrying air through the various ramifications of mines. But the manner of closing up the stoppings was defective, being built of double walls of slate a few feet apart

and the center space filled with slack. Stoppings built in this manner soon settle, leaving an open space at the top through which part of the column of air escapes, and returns to the upcast without reaching the working faces of the miners. Nothing but brick laid in cement should be permitted in building stoppings in mines which give off fire-damp. And this is the practice in all well regulated mines. A solid wall of cement would serve an equally good purpose. But no matter what material may be used the stoppings should be examined every day by a trustworthy local fire-damp expert, as the working faces of the miners are daily examined with the safety lamp. Standing gas should never be allowed to accumulate in a mine.

A week before the occurrence of the terrible catastrophe there had been a serious accident in the shaft, caused by one of the cages flying out of the guides. The brattices and guides were torn out of place and the cage became fastened in the shaft. The ventilation was cut off by the wreck and the miners were notified to leave off work and come to the bottom of the shaft to be withdrawn. They were all raised as soon as possible in an iron basket, improvised for the purpose.

It took five days to repair the wreck. During this time the fan was either slowed down or stopped altogether, as the repairing force in the shaft could not stand the cold when it was running. The general inspector of the New River Fuel Company, Edward Pinkney, whose duties included the Stuart mine, with prudent forethought went down the shaft in company with the superintendent and fire-boss to ascertain to what extent the fire-damp was accumulating, fearing a column of gas might find its way to the shaft and explode on the workmen's naked lights. The natural forces, however, kept up a sufficient current to dilute and render harmless the inflammable air before it reached the pit.

On Sunday, the 27th, the wreck had been repaired, and at five o'clock in the afternoon the fan was started up, and kept

running all night and all Monday. The fire-boss examined the mine Monday and found no gas, except in room No. 9, on the third left entry on the west side of the shaft, better known as the Parral side. On this side fire-damp was generated more freely than on any other division of the workings. The mine was operated day and night. The day shift descended the shaft for the first time since the wreck, on Monday morning. On Tuesday morning the fire-boss stated that he had found no fire-damp in the mine. At 9:30 an ascending cage flew the guides again, but this accident was not as serious as the former one and was repaired by 12:30 p. m.

During the three hours the shaft was undergoing repairs, the majority of the miners gathered at the bottom of the pit to ascertain the cause of the hoisting being stopped. When the first cage came down ten men stepped on it and were hauled to the surface. The other cage was not lowered as it had stuck in the shaft when it flew the guides. Several cageful of miners were drawn up on the one cage, and the last installment had been raised no more than a minute or two before the explosion occurred. There were a number of men and boys at the bottom awaiting to be hoisted and as many more in their rooms, many of whom were either killed by the rolling volume of burning air or lifted off their feet by the force of the concussion and thrown against the props and pillars and killed; those who were out of the line of the inflamed atmosphere, and were not burned, were later killed by the after-damp, the product of the explosion. As the mine had no escapement shaft, and the hoisting shaft was so badly wrecked that the miners on top could not get down to aid in the recovery of the victims of the explosion, not a single soul survived.

No sooner had the explosion occurred than the miners who had been withdrawn, and others from the neighborhood mines volunteered to go down the shaft to assist in the rescue of their fellow-workmen. Owing to the wrecked condition of



the shaft the loose cage could not be used. Both ropes were detached from the hoisting engine, and one of them fastened to an iron basket.

When an explosion of this character takes place there is never any lack of volunteers ready to go down the pit. but for a time there is generally no cool leadership. Every one around the shaft is excited and offering advice as to the best thing to do. A cool and prudent superintendent would have tied a dog in the iron basket and lowered it on the bottom for fifteen or twenty minutes. If the dog came back alive it would have been safe to lower men; but instead of doing this, men were lowered, but were drawn up again before reaching the bottom.

Death by after-damp is painless; the victims gradually become insensible, and if speedily removed recover consciousness, and live. A drowsiness is felt, followed by insensibility; but life exists for an hour or two. It would be well to amend the mining laws of all the coal mining states in the Union, providing rules for most approved methods of recovering victims of an explosion. Several if not all of the European governments provide such legislation.

It was nearly noon on the day following the dreadful catastrophe before a rescuing party reached the bottom of the shaft. Dead men were met strewn around in all directions. After looking well about for half an hour the explorers returned to the surface.

The miners of the New River coal field promptly volunteered their services to assist in the recovery of the dead bodies of their fellow-workmen. The mine was still dangerous with fire-damp in all directions, and naked lights could not be used; but these brave men worked and dared by the feeble light of a safety lamp, until all the bodies were recovered, except a few who were buried under masses of fallen slate. Mr. Edward Pinkney, the general fire-damp inspector of the New River Fuel Company, who had charge

of the rescuing party, bears willing and manly testimony to their unselfish heroism.

Few mining catastrophies ever occurred in the coal mines in the United States, with the exception of the Avondale and the Winter Quarter calamities, which aroused greater feeling than the Stuart mine disaster. The Avondale, like the Stuart and Parral mines, had but one opening. The wooden brattice dividing the shaft into upcast and downcast compartments caught fire in the Avondale mine and the flames set fire to the breaker. The whole of the immense wooden structures covering and surrounding the shaft soon became a vast volume of flame, which rose to a height of a hundred feet and swayed to and fro in the wind. The ponderous pulley wheels, ropes, and all the combustible material fell crashing through the shaft. Every soul in the mine was killed from the gases generated by the fire.

I visited the Stuart mine twice, by authority of the State of West Virginia. The first time on the 19th of February. The mine was in much worse condition than when Mr. Brooks visited it. The air tunnel leading from the mouth of the shaft to the fan had been taken out for repair, and the fan was not running. I, however, went down the pit, accompanied by Mr. Paul, the mine inspector, Mr. Dixon, the general manager, Mr. Pinkney, the general fire-boss, and several other officials of the mine.

I found the mine a vast magazine of gas, with the exception of a few hundred feet around the bottom of the shaft. Evidence of the power and fury of the explosion were met in all directions. I went forward four or five hundred feet on the east side of the workings, when fire-damp was encountered. Finding it impossible to make an inspection of the mine we returned to the bottom and were hoisted up the pit. Mr. Dixon inquired if I was coming back. I answered that I would be back just as soon as the mine was in condition to

be thoroughly inspected, and asked him when it would be. He answered, "In a week or eight days."

On the 11th of March, three weeks after my first visit, I returned expecting that everything would be in shape for a thorough examination, but found that nothing whatever had been done toward repairing the air courses, to remove the fire-damp, except that the tunnel at the top of the shaft had been repaired and the fan running. The air courses were in worse condition than during my former visit. The brattice-cloth, which had been used to repair the parts which had been wrecked by the explosion, to enable the rescuers to penetrate the interior of the mine and recover the dead bodies, had either been tampered with or had become loose, and the greater part of the air currents were escaping and forming a short circuit; vast volumes of inflammable air were still in the mine.

On the west side of the shaft a depression or swamp in the strata had been permitted to fill with water from floor to roof, making it impossible to get into the workings. It was on this side of the mine that the explosion originated, and I was exceedingly anxious to visit the region of the accident. The claim was made by the general manager and the general fire-boss that the explosion was caused by a blown-out shot, which inflamed the coal-dust, the burning dust in turn setting fire to powder smoke. I had no faith whatever in this theory, and regarded it as the stereotyped assertion of the managers of mines in similar catastrophes to throw the blame on the dead miners. I could have told in a minute's examination of the room whether the shot had been fired or not. Mr. Paul, the chief mine inspector, had, however, informed me that he had visited the room in which the management insisted there had been a blown-out shot, and that there was no evidence that the hole had been fired at all. The drillings were still in place on the floor immediately under the hole, and the bit-marks of the drill were still in the

hole, the mouth of the hole was not shattered, and the room had been undercut along its whole width. Two of the district mine inspectors who had examined the room made similar statements under oath at the investigation before Justices A. M. Kincaid and J. P. Staton.

There were only four men in the mine cleaning up the debris. They were working with safety lamps. The conviction forced itself upon me that the general manager did not want me to inspect the mine, and this conviction was strengthened when the chairman of the legislative committee who employed me would not permit me to visit the mine again, claiming that I was charging more for my services than the committee was willing to pay me. To test his sincerity I offered to do the work without any compensation, other than my traveling expenses, and would rely on the legislature at its next session for compensation. He answered that as soon as the committee had a meeting he would let me know whether I could go along or not; but when the committee met I never heard from him afterward.

The New River Fuel Company, which owned and operated the Stuart and Parrel mines, also owned and operated the Whipple mine, the three mines being within a mile or two of each other. The Whipple shaft also exploded two months after the terrible catastrophe of the Stuart explosion. Fortunately the Whipple mine had two openings and a stairway in the escapement shaft, and the men who were beyond the line of the rolling volume of burning air made a rush for this shaft before the after-damp had time to spread through the workings, and climbed the long, exhausting stairway to safety and their families. Fourteen miners lost their lives.

These three mines had Capell fans of eighteen feet diameter, amply capable of furnishing streams of fresh air to dilute and render harmless twice the amount of the inflammable gas generated by the mines, if the current had been

constantly maintained and properly distributed. Such an array of explosions under one management in so short a time is perhaps without a parallel in the history of coal mining in the United States.

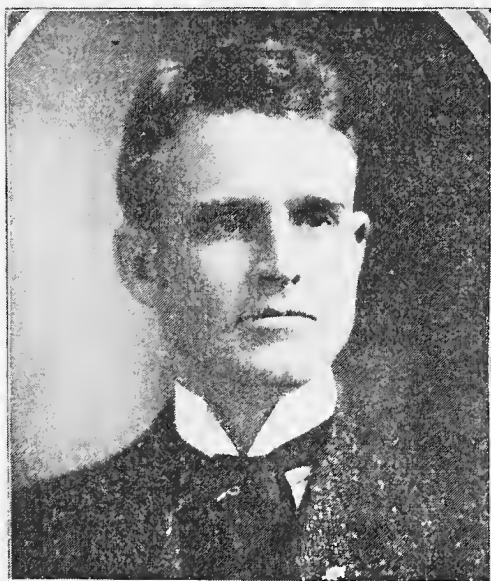
Since the occurrence of these explosions the Legislature of West Virginia has enacted a new mining law, doubling the force of the inspecting department, increasing the salaries of the inspectors, and providing a number of new features which if properly enforced cannot fail to improve the sanitary condition of the mines of the state.

A number of the mining operators of West Virginia are practical miners who have risen from the miners' pick to their present position. John Laing, the president and general manager of the Wyatt Coal Company, is a representative of this class. He has never forgotten that he was once a miner. His father died while still a young man from the effects of bad air, and Laing has always been an earnest and intelligent advocate of fresh air in a mine. In an address which he delivered before the mining commission of West Virginia in 1906 he spoke so earnestly and ably on the preservation of human life in the coal mines of the state as to deserve and receive the commendation of the Governor in his message to the Legislature the following January. "Mr. Laing," said the Governor, "is a representative of those operators who are not afraid of rigid inspection, and who want to obey the law, and who want to protect the lives of the miners and their own property."

John Laing knows from practical experience—for he has passed through all the ordeals of a miner's life—what it is to work for low wages, and what bad air and uncomfortable conditions bring to a miner's home. He takes the manly and correct position that no matter how it may affect the business of a mining operator he should be compelled by law to put and keep his mine in a safe and healthy condition,

and that if the margin of profit cannot afford it the mine should be shut down.

The erection of experimental stations by the Technologic



JOHN LAING.

Branch of the United States Geological Survey in each of the great mining centers of the country to test explosives used in blasting, and make experiments with coal dust and fire-damp, soon to be undertaken, will throw a flood of light on the causes of many accidents in coal mines, and ultimately lead to the lessening of the all too numerous catastrophies, which so often shock the country, and throw whole neighborhoods into mourning.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

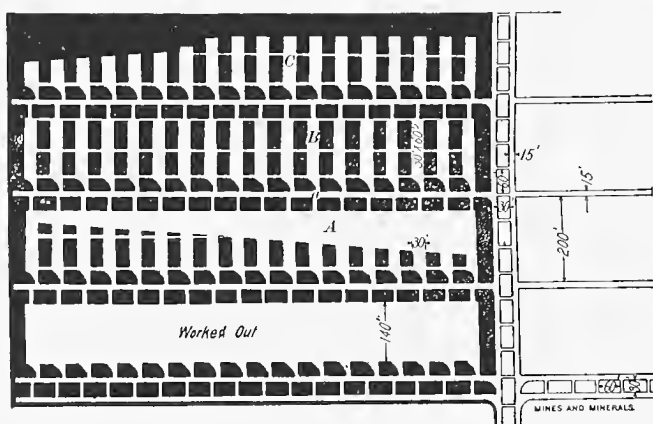
## THE VENTILATION OF COAL MINES.

IN laying out the workings of mines two general systems are adopted with the view as well to provide the means for circulating currents of air through the workings, as for mining away the coal bed, namely: the long wall system and the pillar and room system. By the former method all the coal is excavated as the workings advance progressively forward, the overlying strata being allowed to fall down and close in behind the miners, who maintain traveling-ways by cutting up the floor or blasting down the roof. In the latter method columns of coal are left in the mine as the workings advance for the support of the superincumbent strata, these columns being attacked afterwards; sometimes in a series, of pillars as the workings advance, but more generally after all the rooms have been finished up to the boundary line of the mining plant. Long wall mining, although it can be applied to more advantage in many seams of coal than pillar and room practice, has not yet obtained much of a foothold, our coal being generally won by the pillar and room system.

Pillar and room working, as its name indicates, consists in forming pillars and rooms, alternately, the proportion of coal mined away to that left standing being governed by surrounding circumstances and conditions. Rooms are made wide and pillars narrow when the roof is hard and firm, and the thickness of the overlying strata is not great; when the roof is tender, and the superincumbent strata heavy, narrow rooms and strong pillars are required.

In opening a mine on the pillar and room system, gangways, entries, headings or galleries, as they are variously

called, are first run forward on the face and end slips of the coal bed. These entries, which in all well regulated mines are made double, constitute the main avenues of the mine; they are usually driven much narrower than the rooms or chambers so as to make them extra safe, as well as to add strength to the pillars. The rooms are invariably started from off the butt entries of the mine. In both entries and rooms breakthroughs require to be made from one working place to another at stated intervals for the passage of the ventilating currents of air.



DRAWING PILLARS BEFORE BOUNDARY LINE IS REACHED.

In all coal mines in which improved mining systems are understood, no working place is driven forward more than thirty or forty yards ahead of the circulating current until a breakthrough is cut in the pillar, from one working place to another. All breakthroughs, except those last made near the working faces of the mine, should be built up and rendered air-tight in order to force the air currents forward where the people are employed, for the tendency of the current is to follow the shortest route to the upcast, forming a short circuit.



In mines in which no fire-damp is given off, fully 100 feet of air per miner per minute should be circulated in the mine; in mines which make fire-damp a much greater quantity is required, particularly if the fire-damp is emitted copiously. But this current must be made to sweep through the interior of the mine, where the men are employed, or it will do little good. There may be ten times the amount of air required for the sanitary condition of a mine entering by the intake and being discharged by the upcast, and yet the working places in the interior be in a dangerous condition.

When two separate openings of different depths are made into a mine a current of air is set in motion by the natural pressure of the atmosphere. In winter the lower opening will be the down-cast, and in summer it will be the upcast, because during winter the atmosphere outside is denser and consequently heavier than the air of the mine, while in summer the reverse is the case. During those seasons of the year in which the mine atmosphere and the air outside approximate each other in density there will be no motion, or it will be so slight as to be of little service.

As underground excavations become more extensive the natural forces, even during seasons most favorable to their operation, become wholly inadequate as a ventilating power, owing to the resistance which the top, bottom and sides of the airways offer to the moving current of air, and artificial ventilation has to be applied.

The depth of the ventilating shaft, its freedom from water, the size of the air-courses of the mine, the temperature of the outside atmosphere, all combine in determining the quantity of air which can be moved through a mine by furnace or fan ventilation. In winter the natural forces aid the ventilation, while in summer the natural forces oppose it, like a steamboat going up stream. In deep mines, like those in England, the natural current is in the direction of the upcast all the year round, because the mine air is always rarer

than the atmosphere on the surface; but while in summer there is no opposing force to overcome, there is little assistance given, the temperature of mine and surface air being so nearly equal in weight. In winter the natural forces aid the furnace or fan in proportion to the difference of temperature of the mine and surface air.

Whenever furnace ventilation is applied the supply of air is liable to great irregularity by neglect of the furnace man; and the danger of fire, of which we have so many fatal examples, is ever present. Moreover, in mines where the furnace is placed at the bottom of the hoisting shaft, the guides, the ropes and the timber of the shaft are subject to injury from the gases given off by the furnace. All these evils are obviated by the fan, in addition to the daily saving in fuel and attendance. The furnace is fast disappearing from the mines of the United States, being replaced by the fan.

The more common gases which are generated in coal mines are known among miners as fire-damp, after-damp or choke-damp, black-damp and white-damp. Fire-damp is the light carbureted hydrogen gas of chemistry, and consists of one volume of the vapors of carbon and two volumes of hydrogen, condensed by affinity into one volume. One thousand cubic feet of atmospheric air at the temperature of 32 degrees, and a pressure of 14.7 pounds, weighs 80.728 pounds, and one thousand cubic feet of fire-damp, under the same conditions, weighs 45.368 pounds; the weight of the fire-damp is, therefore, .562 as compared with common air. Being thus lighter than the atmosphere by nearly one-half, it occupies the roof and higher places in mines. In its pure and undiluted state fire-damp will neither support light nor life, but when mixed with twice its bulk of air, it may be breathed, although with suffering. Fire-damp requires a mixture of five times its volume of air to constitute an explosive compound; with this proportion the explosion is very feeble. When a little more

than nine times the volume of air is added to one volume of fire-damp, it forms the most powerful explosive mixture. In this condition, the instant a naked light is brought into contact with the gas, it explodes with the rapidity and violence of gunpowder, and produces the most dreadful results. When more than fourteen times the volume of air is mixed with fire-damp it again ceases to be explosive.

After-damp is the product of an explosion of fire-damp, and contains, when the gas is exploded, 71 parts of pure nitrogen, 9.5 parts of carbonic acid gas, and 19 parts of steam. Immediately after explosion the steam condenses, leaving 7.5 parts of nitrogen and 1 part of carbonic acid out of 8.5 parts, which is a most deadly gas.. The insidious after-damp spreads through the mine, and the miners are soon overpowered by the surcharged atmosphere. A painless stupor gradually overcomes them, and they fall asleep in death.

Black-damp is the carbonic acid gas of chemistry; it is frequently called "stythe" by English miners. Its effect upon animal life is akin to that of the after-damp of an explosion. In its pure state it is a deadly lung poison, neither light nor life being capable of existing amongst it, and the miner's lamp, when placed in a solid stratum of it, becomes instantly extinguished as though it were plunged in water. When 10 per cent. of black-damp is diffused through the air of mines, a light cannot be maintained; and after a light ceases to burn it is never safe for a miner to trust himself for any length of time in such an atmosphere. Black-damp contains two atoms of oxygen and one atom of carbon; its specific gravity is 1.524, common air being one, the oxygen, by weight, forming 72.73 per cent., and the carbon 27.27 per cent. of the gas. Being thus considerably heavier than air, it occupies the floor of mines when in a pure state, but, like other gases, it readily diffuses itself with atmospheric air, in obedience to the well known law of the diffusion of the gases.

The white-damp of mines is the equivalent of carbonic oxide. This gas is much more deleterious to animal life than black-damp; for air containing only 1 per cent. of white-damp is unfit for human respiration, and, if breathed for a few minutes, will surely cause death. Unlike black-damp,



MINER SEARCHING FOR VICTIMS AFTER AN EXPLOSION.  
(By Permission.)

which ordinarily extinguishes the miner's lamp before prostrating his energies, white-damp will support combustion amidst a deadly atmosphere. Miners have frequently been found dead in air charged with white-damp, while their lamps continued to burn with great clearness. The effects of this gas upon animal life, are similar to those of black-damp and to the after-damp of explosion — the miner falls asleep, and after insensibility overcomes him, if not speedily removed, he dies.

White-damp is composed of one atom of oxygen and one atom of carbon. By weight this gas contains 56.69 per cent. of oxygen and 43.31 per cent. of carbon; its specific gravity is 975.195, being little less than atmospheric air.

Sulphureted hydrogen gas is also frequently found in coal mines. It is called white-damp by miners, like carbonic oxide; it is, however, readily distinguished from carbonic oxide by its peculiar smell, which resembles that of rotten eggs. Sulphureted hydrogen consists of 1 atom of sulphur and 1 atom of hydrogen; by weight it contains 94.15 per cent. of sulphur and 5.85 per cent. of hydrogen. This gas is met in abandoned workings in which iron pyrites are undergoing decomposition. It is also generated by contact of hydrogen with sulphur in a comminuted form. Like carbonic oxide, the miner's lamp will burn with clearness in a deadly mixture of this gas. When 3 per cent. of sulphureted hydrogen is found in the air of mines, human life cannot exist except with suffering. It produces fainting fits, giddiness and asphyxia.

These gases are generated in mines from a variety of causes. Fire-damp escapes from the fissures and minute pores of the coal and its associate strata. It is seldom met in very alarming quantities in drift or level free mines, or in shafts of moderate depth. The most fiery mines are those between 600 and 1,200 feet in depth; below this zone very fiery beds of coal are met, but it is the exception rather than

the rule. Fire-damp exists in mines in a highly compressed state, being pent up in the interstices and fissures of the coal by the counterpoising pressure of the atmosphere. When the barometer falls, indicating a lightening of atmospheric pressure, the pent-up gas escapes in greatest volume. Many fatal mining explosions are due to this cause. This gas also frequently escapes in the form of blowers, which produce a hissing voice, and which, when ignited, burn like a long blow-pipe.

Black-damp, like fire-damp, is liberated from the coal and its associate rocks; it is also generated by the burning of lights in the mine, by the exhalations of men and animals, by decaying woodwork and decomposing strata; the gases formed by blasting also aid in the formation of black-damp. This gas is perhaps a more deadly as it is a more subtle enemy of the miner than even fire-damp; the effects of fire-damp are instantaneous, while those of black-damp are slow in operation, gradually but surely undermining the constitution and killing its victims by inches.

White-damp is formed largely from the products of exploded gunpowder; it is also generated freely in waste and abandoned parts of mines, particularly where breeding fires are liable to break out. Both sulphureted hydrogen and carbonic oxide are formed by breeding fires.

The presence of these gases in mines makes ventilation a paramount consideration in working coal or other minerals. Above ground vitiated air immediately flies upward into space, but the air of mines has to circulate from one working place to another, frequently traveling from ten to twelve miles and supplying 300 to 600 men before it reaches the upcast shaft and is delivered to day. As it moves along the labyrinthean passages of the mine it becomes more and more vitiated and unfit for breathing from the loss of oxygen, which is replaced by the noxious and poisonous gases collected on the way. When we consider the numerous complaints which reach the

public ear, arising over the condition of badly ventilated public buildings and workshops, and remember the numerous treaties which have been written on the best methods of improving the ventilation of such buildings, we are forcibly reminded of those dark subterranean workshops, amidst which the causes which tend to vitiate the atmosphere are multiplied a hundred fold, and where not even a ray of God's sunlight can ever come.

There are no problems in regard to the proper ventilation of mines which may not be solved by any clear-headed, practical miner, no matter how limited his education may be, if he will only faithfully endeavor to inform himself. In the great majority of shallow mines there is no fire-damp. It is for this reason that the art of mine ventilation is not better understood by mine bosses, and yet the necessity for approved knowledge on the part of the responsible managers of mines is as great as in the case of non-fiery mines, as in those that give off copious discharges of fire-damp. Although an explosion of inflammable gas destroys its victims in the most sudden and appalling manner; in the mines where black-damp is allowed to load the air the men's health is slowly, but nevertheless surely undermined. Roomy air-courses, well-constructed furnaces, better still, good ventilating fans, will move an abundant column of air. Double-entries underground, the proper and timely opening of break-throughs to send the current well up to the working-faces of the miners, promptly closing and rendering air-tight all unused air-holes, will keep the working-faces sweet and wholesome.

A general but a very erroneous opinion prevails, not only on the part of the public, but even among mine-owners, that mines in which no fire-damp is given off are not dangerous to life, as compared with explosive mines. This would be true if non-explosive mines were as well ventilated as those which make fire-damp. But adequate ventilation is not applied in such mines, because they can be wrought without going to

the expense of providing costly and elaborate furnaces or fans, air-courses, stoppings, and brattice. From four to six cents a ton are thus saved in mining the coal that should be applied in ventilating, but saved at the expense of the workmen's health. When the ventilation is neglected in fiery mines, explosion follows, as already stated, and all the world knows the result; but when the ventilation is neglected in non-fiery mines, and men are dying by inches, the world knows it not. The complaints of the miners — and they are ever grumbling and fault-finding when working in bad air — are too often set down as whims worthy of no regard.

Constant labor in a badly-aired mine breaks down the constitution and clouds the intellect. The lungs become clogged up from inhaling coal dust, and from breathing noxious air; the body and limbs become stiff and sore, the mind loses the power of vigorous thought. After six years' labor in a badly ventilated mine — that is, a mine where a man with a good constitution may from habit be able to work every day for several years — the lungs begin to change to a bluish color. After twelve years they are black, and after twenty years they are densely black, not a vestige of natural color remaining, and are little better than carbon itself. The miner dies at thirty-five years, of coal-miner's consumption. In a mine where the circulation is constantly renewed, and a pure current made to sweep the faces of the workings where the people are employed, little or no injury to health results from underground coal mining. Six to eight hours immersion in a coal mine in a working-day is however as long as nature can stand, as mines are generally operated, without injury at an early age to the constitution and vigor of the mind.

When business men, literary men, and in short, men of every profession, who have means, overtax their minds and undermine their health by too close application to study and duty, they seek rest and recuperation by a few weeks' or



months' travel in the country, or they take a trip to Europe, etc., and in this course they are encouraged and advised by their physicians. Human nature is the same in the miner's cottage as in the mansion of the rich and great; and hence when the miner becomes worked down in exhausting subterranean regions to which there is no parallel on earth, and nature demands rest and recuperation, he finds it in a strike. The lives of miners are prolonged many years by reason of their numerous strikes. The better policy would be for the miner, when he finds his health and physical energy giving way, to change his occupation, or seek recuperation by resting singly; but men, whose intellects have become clouded, whose tempers have become soured, and whose bones have become stiff and sore by breathing the foul and noxious air of the mine, cannot reason. The best remedy for the prevention of strikes and consequent lawlessness is not in cursing the folly and fatuity of miners, nor in urging the enactment of conspiracy laws, but in applying thorough and vigorous and never-ceasing ventilation.

Jules Verne, one of the ablest writers of our times, has drawn a picture of a peaceful village whose inhabitants had lived for centuries in harmony and contentment. By a peculiar process, Dr. Ox extracted from the air its due proportion of oxygen. The simple villagers, who had lived for centuries in peace, became fretful and quarrelsome. Fanciful wrongs, which formerly were passed by without concern, assumed large proportions; neighbors who had been life-long friends became bitter enemies. The quarrel did not confine itself to the village, but all the surrounding villages were regarded as enemies. War ensued, and there was no end to the quarrel until the Doctor was discovered at his nefarious work and got rid of.

Unless the mine atmosphere becomes too foul to admit working every day, miners seldom lay down their tools in strike and demand better ventilation. The air of a mine is

always better in some places than others, and miners working in the worst air will work as long as they can stand up for fear of being regarded by their fellows as lacking unusual powers of endurance.

In the earlier days of the development of the mines, the grumbling and fault-finding of the miners were much greater than now, because the mines are better ventilated than formerly. Jules Verne, had he known, did not need to draw on his imagination in describing quarrelsome neighbors, caused by extracting its due proportion of oxygen from the air. He would have found like conditions at the mining villages of the United States.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

## CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY.

**I**N a number of the coal producing states all applicants for the position of mine boss, fire boss and mine inspector are required to submit to an examination before a technical board and receive a certificate of competency to be eligible to fill any of these positions.

The following questions were put to applicants for examination in the bituminous fields of Pennsylvania in 1907:

## QUESTIONS FOR FIRST GRADE FIRE BOSS.

First. State what experience you have had in gaseous mines in this State, give name and location of each mine, length of time employed in each, and the different capacities in which you obtained such experience.

Second. Describe in detail how you would make an examination as fire boss in a mine to ascertain if all places were in a safe condition; when and how would you make your report of such examination. But in the event of dangers being discovered from any cause, what would you do, and how would you report the same? Explain fully.

Third. Could white-damp be present in the after-damp of an explosion, and if so, what condition of the explosive mixtures would produce this result?

Fourth. In making your round in the morning, say in No. 1 entry and Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 pillars, you found the gas down to edge of roof on the falls, and the pillars were being worked with safety lamps, and rooms and entries in the same air split were being worked with open lights, what would you do in this case? Explain fully.

Fifth. An air-way 7x8 feet and 1,000 feet in length is passing 20,000 cubic feet of air and gas per minute, the pro-

portion of the mixture being one of air and one of gas, by reducing the quantity of air one-half, what would then be the velocity in feet per second, and what would be the result if a lighted safety lamp was placed in this current.

Sixth. Is it possible to have an explosion in a mine when a safety lamp gives no evidence of the presence of fire-damp? Explain fully.

Seventh. When and how would you remove a body of standing gas from the working part of the mine? Explain fully.

Eighth. What knowledge should a person possess relative to mine gases, safety lamps, and the condition of the mine generally, to enable him to become a careful and efficient fire-boss? Name the explosive gases found in the mines of this State, where and under what conditions are they found.

Ninth. What are the lawful duties of a fire-boss and what should be the character and qualifications of persons filling such a position?

Tenth. In making your second round in the morning, while the miners and others are at work, state fully your duty on visiting the workmen, and whether or not you should always be in possession of your safety lamp, and whether you should make a careful examination well up on the falls and other working places where explosive gas could accumulate.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SECOND GRADE FOREMAN.

First. What are the legal duties of a mine foreman?

Second. What precautions should be taken to prevent mine fires in non-gaseous mines?

Third. What are the inexplusive gases found in bituminous coal mines, how are they produced, where found, and what precautions would you use to render them harmless?

Fourth. If 10,000 cubic feet of air per minute was passing into a mine, how would this quantity divide itself into two splits, each air-course being of the following dimensions:

A. Four (4) feet high and twelve (12) feet wide and 7,000 feet long.

B. Six (6) feet high and eight (8) feet wide and 8,000 feet long.

Fifth. What are the legal requirements in regard to providing and maintaining shelter holes along haulage roads, cut-throughs in room pillars, check doors in guiding the ventilation and in making dusty mines safe?

Sixth. A fan 16 feet in diameter, running at a speed of 50 revolutions per minute, producing 40,000 cubic feet of air per minute, at a water gauge of one inch, what would be the quantity of air and height of water gauge if the speed of the fan was increased to 75 revolutions per minute?

Seventh. What method would you adopt to obtain a large volume of air with the least possible mine resistance?

Eighth. What is the practical limit to the splitting of air currents in mines?

Ninth. What grade would you consider the most economical for animal haulage, and what is the maximum grade against the loads that an electric motor will give satisfactory results?

Tenth. If at a mine where there are several districts, each ventilated by a separate split of air, and where the ventilating power is sufficient, it is found that the ventilating current in one district is inadequate, what would you do to improve the ventilation in that district?

Eleventh. If 13.146 cubic feet of air weighs one pound, what would be the weight of air in a round chamber 18 feet in diameter and 12 feet high?

Twelfth. Describe the construction and use of the water gauge, and what are the three laws of friction as applied to mine ventilation.

Thirteenth. Describe briefly the fan as a mechanical means of producing ventilation, also the difference between artificial and natural ventilation.

Fourteenth. Can or cannot a uniform system of posting be established in all coal mines? State your reasons why.

Fifteenth. Supposing the coal in one mine is being mined by pick, and the grades in such are favorable to animal haulage, and in another, in which the mining is done by mining machines, what would be the economical limit in distance where mechanical power should supersede animal power for such purpose; and, should mechanical power be approved, what system would you install?

Sixteenth. What are the general requirements in regard to the use and construction of doors, overcasts, and stoppings?

Seventeenth. In driving your entries you encountered an upthrow of the coal seam of 75 feet in vertical height, what method would you adopt to obtain the coal with the greatest safety and economy.

Eighteenth. (a.) What should be the maximum speed that a pump should be driven at to insure safety, economy and continuous service?

(b.) How many minutes will be required to empty a tank 6 feet in diameter and ten inches in diameter, piston speed 100 feet per minute, disregarding friction or allowances for leakage?

Nineteenth. As a mine foreman what precautions would you take to reduce the number of accidents in mines caused by falls of roof, draw slate, coal, mine cars and mining machines?

Twentieth. What is likely to occur when working a coal seam under heavy cover by the irregular drawing of pillars?

Twenty-First. Give your reasons why rooms and pillars should be of such width and thickness in one mine and of different width and thickness in another to insure safety and economy.

Twenty-Second. As a mine foreman of a mine what precautionary measures would you keep in view to insure the

safe ingress and egress of the employes working in a mine in cases of emergency?

Twenty-third. Describe in detail what general system of posting you would adopt in high and in thin coal seams, in pillar workings, to secure the greatest safety to the miners, and what precautions would you adopt in drawing posts in pillar work to reduce the number of accidents resulting therefrom?

Twenty-Fourth. What would be your method of procedure in regard to the first aid to injured persons from the following classes of accidents in the mines: (1) Burns, (2) electric shock, (3) broken limbs and cuts, (4) when overcome with noxious gases.

Twenty-fifth. State what experience you have had in gaseous mines in this State, giving name and location of each mine, length of time employed in each, and the different capacities in which you obtained such experience.

Twenty-sixth. How would you prevent explosions in gaseous and dusty mines, and in case of an explosion what would be the safest method to adopt in rescuing the workmen?

Twenty-seventh. Will the sprinkling of coal dust in a mine with water be a sure preventive of a dust explosion? Give reasons in full.

Twenty-eight. Name the noxious gases found in the bituminous mines of this State. Which are destructive to life, or injurious to health, and where and under what conditions would you expect to find them?

Twenty-ninth. When, where and under what conditions would you insist in the use of locked safety lamps?

QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES FOR CERTIFICATES AS  
STATE MINE INSPECTORS.

(Springfield, Ill., September 10, 1907.)

First. What are the requirements of the laws of Illinois in reference to the examination of candidates for State Mine Inspectors?

Second. As Mine Inspector how would you proceed to examine a mine so as to secure efficiency and safety of the men employed?

Third. Give the names of the American Devonian; it is sub-divided into four groups of strata?

Fourth. What is a fossil, and in your own words tell of its formation?

Fifth. Give the number of seams of coal worked in the ten inspection districts of Illinois. Name the number generally worked in each district, the character of the covering, also the strata underlying the coal.

Sixth. We have 25.073 cubic feet of gas in the face of an entry, the barometer reading 30.7 inches. How will this volume be affected if the barometer falls to 29.9 inches?

Seventh. An airway 5,000 feet long, five feet high and seven feet wide passes 10,000 cubic feet of air per minute and we want to enlarge the airway in the same rectangle form to pass 30,000 cubic feet of air per minute, the pressure remaining the same. How wide and high must the airway be to make the change?

Eighth. Give the total cost to sink a shaft 3,000 feet deep: the shaft is 18 feet diameter after being finished with two feet of brick work. Give the total cost at 27 cents per cubic foot to take out the dirt. The total cost of brick to wall up the shaft, the brick delivered at the mine to cost \$6.32 per M. Each brick is 8 ins. by 4 ins. by 2 ins. Make a sketch of the kind and size of rings you would place in the shaft?

Ninth. How many acres and tons of lump coal are there in the following described piece of land: The coal is 4 feet 6 inches high, allowing 27 cubic feet to one ton, 38% for screening and 11% for waste. Commencing at the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of section 28, running due north 773 feet, thence north  $84\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ , east 553 feet, thence north  $81\frac{3}{4}$ , east 702 feet, thence north  $72\frac{3}{4}^{\circ}$ , east 519 feet,



thence north  $82^{\circ}$ , east 662 feet, thence south  $69^{\circ}$ , east 340 feet, thence due south 1070 feet, thence west to place of beginning.

Tenth. Give the diameter of a cylinder to develop 50 horse power in a non-condensing engine which has a stroke of 4 feet and makes 45 revolutions per minute when working with a mean effective pressure of 30 lbs.

Eleventh. With a water gauge of 1.75 what is the pressure and what would be the velocity of a wind, no friction taken into account, caused by such a pressure? The weight of a cubic foot of air being .0807 lbs.

Twelfth. What will be the velocity of wind in miles per hour when 6 lbs. of powder has been fired on the air current; the entry is 6x8, the hole has been tamped with a solid tamping 3 feet; friction is not taken in this case?

Thirteenth. Some time ago we sank a shaft in the center of four quarter-sections of land; the coal is 4 feet high and we have worked it out on the long-wall plan and on a full circular. We have worked the coal out within 200 feet of the line. How many tons of screened lump have we taken out, allowing 27 cubic feet to the ton and 35% for screenings and waste?

Fourteenth. What gradient would be necessary for a self-action incline whose length is 1,500 feet, eight cars being sent on either side, each empty car 800 lbs., and each car weighing 2,000 lbs., of coal, rope  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch diameter, the friction of the loads being taken at 1-50 of the weight and the friction of the rollers 1-25 of the weight?

Fifteenth. The cylinder of an engine is 30 ins. diameter and 60 ins. stroke and makes 30 revolutions per minute and exhausts at a little over atmospheric pressure at which steam may be accepted as being 1,600 times the volume of water taking water at 62.5 lbs. per cubic foot. Find the weight of steam consumed per hour.

Sixteenth. Do we gain or lose any power by placing a stack 50 feet high above the casing of a fan or furnace; the stack is 10x10 and the up-cast is the same?

Seventeenth. The total quantity of air passing over a furnace is 200,000 cubic feet per minute, burning five tons of coal per 12 hours. How much increase of air would we obtain by adding five more tons coal for the 12 hours to the furnace?

Eighteenth. When does heat become latent? What do you understand by latent heat of steam? What unit should be used for measuring quantities of heat? Give the number expressing the latent heat of steam at 212 F.

Nineteenth. If an entry, A to B, rises  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches per yard for 60 yards, from B to C  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches per yard for 40 yards, what is the inclination from A to C and the depth at B? Assuming the cutting to be 6 feet wide, and every 14 cubic feet of cutting weighed one ton, how many tons would such cuttings yield?

Twentieth. What is the horizontal base and vertical height of an incline plane 30.75 chains long and rising 1 in 4?

Twenty-one. At the bottom of a pair of shafts, one 300 yards deep and the other 350 yards deep, we wish to drive a drift from one to the other. The distance between the shafts is  $21\frac{3}{4}$  chains and the difference of surface level is 20 yards. What is the inclination of the entry? The deeper pit is 20 yards above the shallower pit.

Twenty-two. What is a triple-expansion engine and how many cylinders has it? What are their names? Why do we have triple-expansion engines?

Twenty-three. Give the kind and size of engines you would use to hoist 1,500 tons of coal up a shaft 3,000 feet deep in 8 hours. Steam pressure 100 lbs. per square inch, weight of coal in cars three tons. Give time for caging coal, size of ropes, diameter of drum, and size of pulleys?

Twenty-fourth. The barometer at the top of the shaft is 30.2 inches. The thermometer is 64 F. The depth of the shaft is 1,100 feet and the thermometer stands at 75° F. at the shaft bottom. What is the difference in the pressure of the air at the top and the bottom of the shaft, and the difference in the reading of the barometer?

Twenty-fifth. If 20,000 cubic feet of air pass in circular airway 12 feet diameter what quantity will pass in one 6 feet diameter?

Twenty-sixth. If the quantity of air passing into a mine is 50,000 cubic feet per minute, the water gauge is 1.5, what is the horse power?

Twenty-seventh. What horse power would an engine exert when yielding 60% of duty to move 100,000 cubic feet of air per minute? The water gauge stands at 1 inch.

Twenty-eighth. What weight will break 6 two-inch by 8-inch and 1 one-inch by 8-inch white oak boards spiked together, 18 feet long and 16 feet between supports, equally loaded all along its length?

Twenty-ninth. A surveyor's chain measures 66 feet. A link is 100th part of a chain. An oblong field has all its right angles. How many square yards does it contain when the length of the field is 5 chains and 72 links, and the width of the field is 3 chains and 45 links?

Thirtieth. What horse power will we need in a pair of air compressing engines 30-inch diameter cylinders, 5 feet stroke, running 30 revolutions per minute and compressing the air at 60 lbs. per square inch above atmospheric pressure?

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## THE DURATION OF THE COAL SUPPLY.

**I**N an address delivered by William McKinley, Governor of Ohio, February 9, 1892, before the ninth annual convention of the United Mine Workers of America, he stated that the coal area of the United States was in round numbers three hundred thousand square miles, and that the area of the world was four hundred thousand, so that we represent three-fourths of the whole. He stated that the output of the coal mines in the year 1850 was seven and a quarter million tons, and that in 1881 we mined over a hundred million tons.

In the year 1850 Great Britain produced sixty-five million tons and was doubling her annual output every twenty years. This was nearly nine times more than the production of the United States—our product for 1850 being as already stated, seven and a quarter million tons. Since that time we have on an average doubled our annual output every ten years; and before the close of the last century we had passed England in the production of coal, and are now (1906) mining more coal than all the world.

The United States Geological Survey has estimated that the amount of coal available in the various coal fields of our country is in round numbers 2,200,000,000,000 tons. These figures are little better than mere guess-work, because it is not only difficult but simply impossible to make even an approximate estimate of the coal supply, by reason of the disappearance over vast areas of many, if not all, of the coal beds, where they are due.

A hundred years ago Talleyrand compared the infant republic of the United States to a giant without bones. If

he could now arise from his grave and take an extended trip over the country he would find that the bones had become fully developed, and that the giant had become the greatest world power among the nations of the earth.

The comparison of the great Frenchman applies to our coal fields with considerable force. We possess the largest portion of the coal bearing rocks of the earth, and have numerous beds of coal in all our coal bearing strata; but they are disposed throughout our coal fields in shreds and patches rather than in continuous sheets. For example in the lower coal measures of the State of Ohio there are at least seven seams of coal which rise to minable height, some of them to the height of ten and twelve feet; but none of the seams are continuous. It is a rare thing to find even two seams in place, one above the other. The same conditions obtain in a greater or less degree in every coal producing state of the great Appalachian coal field, which extends through nine different states, stretching from Pennsylvania to Georgia.

In the Central coal field, which stretches to Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and other states, many of the seams are often absent or are present as a mere trace. All our coal fields as far as developments have progressed show great wants where coal is due. President Roosevelt acted wisely when he issued the order temporarily withdrawing from sale sixty-four millions of acres of government coal lands in the west. Not another acre of coal land controlled by the general government should be sold.

The amount of coal mined in the United States during the half century beginning with the year 1816, and ending with the year 1905 as given out by the United States Geological Survey is as follows:

1816 to 1825.....	331,356
1826 to 1835.....	4,168,149
1836 to 1845.....	23,177,637
1846 to 1855.....	83,417,825

1856 to 1865.....	173,705,014
1866 to 1875.....	410,425,104
1876 to 1885.....	847,760,310
1886 to 1895.... ..	1,586,098,641
1896 to 1905.....	2,832,599,452

More than 50 per cent. of the total production of coal in the United States from 1816 to the close of 1906, namely, 3,540,000,000 tons was mined in Pennsylvania. The anthracite production amounted to 1,854,906,000 tons, and the bituminous output to 1,695,926,009.

Illinois ranks second with a total production of 594,551,162 tons, and Ohio third with 460,626,939 tons. West Virginia, although not coming into existence as a separate state until 1863, ranks fourth with a total production of forty-four years of 386,106,956 tons. Alabama comes fifth with 150,483,856 tons, and Maryland sixth with 142,073,920 tons.

In the past four or five years the increase of the annual output of coal has been phenomenal. This unparalleled increase has set many of our political philosophers thinking over the probability of the danger of the near exhaustion of the coal supply. If the increase in production were to continue in the relative proportion in the next fifty years as it has done in the past fifty years in the mines of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and West Virginia, the output of these states would decline as rapidly the latter half of the twentieth century as they increased in the first half of it.

In the early development of the coal trade of the United States the manner of working and winning the coal was simple and crude. Coal was abundant and cheap. The beds of coal which cropped out on the hill-sides were the first attacked. As a rule the majority of mines in those days were worked without art, without science and with mere brute instinct. But since the enactment of the laws for the regulation, ventilation and inspection of mines, and the application of coal cutting machines, vast improvements have

been made in their condition and in laying out the workings. A mine which produced two hundred tons of coal a day was regarded as a large mine. At the present time two thousand tons and upward per day is often produced. Every coal company now employs a mining engineer to lay out the workings, and survey and map the mine. Much of the coal which was lost by bad management is being recovered. A hundred acres of coal was formerly regarded as sufficient for one colliery. A thousand acres is now regarded as a small plant. This is essentially a century of commerce, steam and electricity, the foundation of which are our coal mines. Coal is the Atlas of the world.







